

# THE MILITANT

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Socialist steelworkers  
assess shakeup in AFL-CIO

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## Imperialist air strikes widen war in Balkans

BY PAT SMITH

After weeks of prodding by Washington, NATO governments launched air strikes against Serb forces in Bosnia May 25 and 26, widening the five-year-old war in the area that was once Yugoslavia. The *New York Times* called the action, "a target deliberately chosen to raise the ante." In response, troops loyal to rightist Serb leader Radovan Karadzic seized nearly 400 United Nations soldiers, hoping to fend off further attacks.

But representatives of Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, and Moscow — known as the Contact Group — pledged May 30 to expand the size of the UN force in Bosnia and supply those troops with heavier armaments. As images of UN troops chained to posts near military targets flashed across TV screens, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher said, "The use of air power must remain an option." The most recent attack was the eighth time in the past 15 months that U.S. and NATO jets bombed targets in the former Yugoslavia.

Along with seizing UN troops, Serb forces responded to the NATO bombing of an ammunition depot near Pale by shelling five of the six Bosnian towns designated by the United Nations as "safe areas," including Sarajevo. More than 80 people were killed in the retaliation by Karadzic's forces. A senior UN official responded by warning, "They are escalating. We will escalate. We will go on with our last remaining option, more air strikes."

The air bombardments and expanded military presence in the former Yugoslavia come as Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian forces have stepped up fighting in the region and the imperialists continue to fail in their efforts to broker an agreement between the warring groups.

Serb forces under Gen. Ratko Mladic,

Continued on Page 12

## Campaign spirit is needed for sales drive

BY LAURA GARZA

In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and Montevideo, Uruguay, participants in recent political conferences welcomed the socialist publications the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the Spanish- and French-language editions of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*.

Haitian activists attending the third congress of the National Popular Assembly, held May 26-28, were eager to read the newly published *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 5, buying seven copies, and five other editions of the magazine, along with pamphlets in French on Cuba, and copies of Malcolm X's speeches and the *Action Program to Confront the Coming*

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## Brazil oil strikers call for dignity, sovereignty

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS  
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

SÃO PAULO, Brazil — "This strike is about our dignity and sovereignty," said Eduardo Jenner Ozório, an operator at the Petrobrás oil refinery in Cubatão, Brazil, located on the Atlantic coast some 50 miles east of here. Jenner gave an interview to the *Militant* May 30 through the steel gate that keeps the main entrance of the refinery shut. Strikers have been occupying the plant since May 2 when 47,000 unionists shut down 11 refineries around the country run by Petrobrás, the state-owned monopoly.

"As long as solidarity continues, we will stay out against all odds until at least some of our basic demands are met," Jenner stated. "Fernando Henrique Cardoso [Brazil's president] says the strike is about principles. Well, we'll stick by our principles." The oil workers oppose the government's plans to sell off shares of the company to private capitalists, lay off thousands of workers, and speed up production. They also demand the government abide by a contract it signed last September granting a wage increase.

As the walkout enters its second month, 85 percent to 90 percent of the workers remain on strike, according to the union. The big-business media claims only 11,000 unionists are still out.

"That's a bald-faced lie," Jenner said of these claims. "This is a class war. The government will do anything to give the impression we're being defeated. If 36,000 have broken ranks, what's all the clamor about the strike? Why use the army, the cops, their 'justice system,' and all the media to crush a few losers?"

The ruling families of Brazil, alarmed that the determined resistance of the oil strikers is increasingly setting an example for millions of other workers and farmers, have unleashed the entire state machinery against the unionists.

"The government's plan against the strike includes stockpiling, dismissals, and use of the Supreme Labor Tribunal and



Oil workers in Brazil walked off the job May 2. Solidarity actions have aided the strike.

troops," read a headline in the May 31 *Veja*, a weekly magazine published here.

On May 24 the government deployed nearly 2,000 soldiers and military police, who occupied four refineries in Mauá, Paulínia (the largest refinery in Latin America), and San José dos Campos in the state of São Paulo; and Araucária in the state of Paraná. The fourth Petrobrás refinery in the São Paulo area is occupied by the workers. The remaining six refineries in six other states are picketed by strikers.

Capitalist government officials and newspapers throughout South America hailed Cardoso's military move. "I am in total agreement with the firm attitude Cardoso showed, which is necessary to continue the process of economic transformation" of Brazil, declared Argentine president Carlos Menem, whose government has rammed similar measures down the throats of workers in that country. "I tell him: 'Fernando, don't let up.'"

On May 27 Brazil's Supreme Labor Tribunal, which has twice declared the

strike "illegal and abusive" and has ordered workers to return to their jobs, fined each of the 21 unions affiliated to the Federation of Oil Workers \$110,000 a day for each day the walkout continues. The penalties, amounting to \$2.3 million a day, are retroactive to the beginning of the strike.

The government also threatened to fire all Petrobrás employees who are not back on the job by June 1 — 30 days since the start of the strike.

On May 31 the oil workers at the Rio de Janeiro and Paulínia refineries voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike despite the threats of mass firings. A union leader at the Paulínia refinery informed management that "the threat of mass firings does not preoccupy us at all." The other striking locals are voting June 1 on whether to stay on the picket lines.

The capitalist rulers have also unleashed a major propaganda offensive against the workers. Daily articles, editori-

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An appeal to  
our readers

HELP THE 'MILITANT' PROVIDE EYEWITNESS REPORTS  
FROM ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, HAITI, AND CUBA

Dear Reader,

During the next few weeks, *Militant* reporting teams will bring our readers on-the-spot coverage of the impact of the capitalist economic crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean and working people's response, as well as continue our eyewitness reports on developments in Cuba.

This week Argiris Malapanis, who has written extensively about developments in Cuba, and Martín Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, are covering the oil workers strike in Brazil, as well as the São Paulo Forum, which took place in Montevideo, Uruguay. The forum is a gathering of political parties from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean that identify with the fight for national sovereignty and against imperialist domination.

Koppel and Malapanis will spend another week in Brazil and Argentina covering politi-

cal developments there, interviewing strikers, human rights activists, and others.

A team of *Militant* correspondents — Mary-Alice Waters and Luis Madrid from New York and Ernie Mailhot from Miami — will spend two weeks in Cuba in June and participate in a conference of U.S. and Cuban philosophers and social scientists. They will visit Havana and Matanzas and speak with workers, farmers, and youth on the measures being taken to confront Cuba's economic crisis and defend the socialist revolution.

Another feature of *Militant* coverage beginning next week will be first-hand reporting from Haiti. These trips make possible the kind of unmatched coverage the *Militant* has been able to consistently provide on Cuba and working-class struggles throughout the Americas. The cost of these trips will exceed \$14,000, so your generous help

is needed.

The *Militant* depends on the contributions from our readers to make these trips possible. Please send your contribution today!

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*Naomi Craine*  
Naomi Craine  
Business Manager

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Women's rights supporters defuse Operation Rescue — page 4





## Bolivian teachers remain in jail; unions sign accord with gov't

Several leaders of striking teachers unions in Bolivia remain in jail and are being subjected to continued government repression. On May 17, police raided two prisons to force union leaders to halt a hunger strike. Inmates at the prisons staged protests to try to stop the police action. The three union leaders — Vilma Plata, Gonzalo Soruco, and Jose Luis Alvarez — were moved to separate sites, supposedly to receive medical treatment. Plata, who began her fast May 10, is facing charges of sedition and disturbing public order. She said that she had been subjected to "brutal aggression" at the hands of the police.

Some 300 union leaders have been detained for protesting government austerity measures and plans to privatize state industries since a state of siege was declared April 18. Recently an accord was signed between the government and the main union organization, the Bolivian Workers Federation. Government ministers hailed the accords, which they hope will end the three-month wave of protests. But union leaders note that wage demands have not been met and union leaders remain in jail.

## Mexico gov't ordered phone taps

In an interview in the Mexico daily *La Jornada* May 26, workers at the Telmex phone company said wiretaps were routinely ordered by the government. Union leaders estimated some 200,000 lines were tapped, including those of politicians, leaders of workers and peasants organizations, and journalists.

## Cholera hits Mexico, Guatemala

A cholera outbreak has hit Mexico and Guatemala. More than 1,740 cases have already been reported across Mexico this year, close to triple the 1994 level. In Guatemala, the town of Sanarate, 30 miles east of Guatemala City, had 542 cases and four deaths in one week. Riot police were called in to protect the mayor's office as villagers protested inadequate water treatment. Health workers complained that a lack of medicine and purified water was hampering efforts to contain the disease.

Meanwhile, a drought in northern Mexico is causing massive crop loss and



Vilma Plata, a leader of the teachers union in Bolivia, is being held in a La Paz prison. She denounced the police for brutalizing her while in custody.

killing hundreds of thousands of cattle.

The United States turned down a Mexican government request May 9 to alleviate the drought with water from the Rio Grande. Under terms of a 1944 water-management treaty Mexico is not entitled to draw the amount of water currently needed. U.S. officials said they would allow enough water to be drawn for drinking, but not for irrigation.

## Protests rock St. Lucia

A recent two-day strike called by the Industrial Solidarity Pact, a grouping of trade unions, shut down schools, the treasury, postal and customs services, and affected prison operations and the Victoria Hospital on the island of St. Lucia. According to *Carib-News* about 1,000 workers marched through Castries and staged a vigil around government offices.

The strike was launched to demand a pay increase for public sector workers,

and the scrapping of an amendment to the Criminal Code that unions view as aimed at hurting the labor movement. Prime Minister John Compton said the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have warned against giving in to the unions' demands.

## Ghanaians protest tax hikes

Since late April nurses, teachers, and civil servants have taken to the streets of Ghana's capital city, Accra, protesting price hikes prompted by the government's imposition of a 17.5 percent value-added tax. This followed a 25 percent rise in gasoline prices announced in January. While food is supposedly exempt from the tax, food prices have jumped by as much as 300 percent.

On May 11, about 10,000 marched on the central market in Accra. Pro-government forces confronted the marchers and five people were killed with 17 wounded. But the actions have continued with a protest that shut down the ministry of finance in mid May, and a rally in front of the ministry of trade and industry on May 19. Unions are demanding a 70 percent wage hike.

## Oil damage to spread in Russia

As spring thaws the rivers around Usinsk, 1,000 miles northeast of Moscow, the damage from an oil spill last August and September threatens to spread even wider. Russian officials now estimate that 100,000 tons of oil sprang from major leaks in the Usinsk-Kharyaga pipeline, about three times the amount dumped by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska. The oil spread across 170 acres of stream, and marshland, blackening the Kolva, Usa,

and salmon-rich Pechora rivers.

Komineft, the company running the pipeline, never shut it off, relying simply on attempts to stanch the flow with dams. In March the World Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development responded to a request for aid to clean up the major ecological disaster by pledging \$125 million. More than \$2 billion was spent on the Exxon Valdez cleanup efforts. The banks stipulated that a western company had to be given the contract.

## U.S. is major arms supplier

The U.S. government is leading the way in the spread of conventional weapons. A report issued by the New School for Social Research notes in 45 of 50 armed conflicts studied the U.S. supplied arms to one or more parties.

The United States has the distinction of being the world's major weapons supplier with arms sales abroad totaling 22.3 billion in 1993. The study also notes U.S. companies provided at least 13 percent of the weapons in the former Yugoslavia and 95 percent of the weapons imported for use by British and Protestant paramilitary forces in Northern Ireland. The report listed governments involved in domestic and border conflicts where U.S. weapons have been used, including Britain, Turkey, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Liberia, Panama, Chile, and Haiti before the U.S. invasion.

## Identity card proposed

Not to be outdone by Patrick Buchanan, Dianne Feinstein, a Democratic senator from California, explained her support for a national identification system. To deal with the problem of possible fraud in the production of any such card she proposes possible solutions including, "a magnetic strip on which the bearer's unique voice, retina pattern, or fingerprint is digitally encoded."

## Too much poison in cigarettes

Marlboro, the world's best-selling brand, was among 8 billion cigarettes recalled by the Philip Morris Co. Philip Morris determined that half a dozen chemical contaminants had been among the agents in a plasticizer spray used on the filters. The contaminants could cause "temporary discomfort, including eye, nose, and throat irritation, dizziness, coughing, and wheezing," said Richard Carchman, the director of scientific affairs for Philip Morris. But, he assured, the effects are "short term and reversible."

— LAURA GARZA

## THE MILITANT

## Oppose the death penalty!

Capitalists around the world are stepping up their attacks on the rights of working people, including greater use of the death penalty. The *'Militant'* follows the protests and other activities aimed at abolishing this barbaric punishment. Don't miss a single issue!



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# South Africa unions launch mass actions

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The 1.4 million member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) announced that it will launch a two-week campaign of rolling mass action, culminating in a half-day nationwide strike June 19, to win progress on negotiations with employers on the draft Labor Relations bill. The labor bill is scheduled to be debated by the South African parliament sometime in June, but deadlocked negotiations threaten to prevent its passage in this year's parliamentary session.

"We simply came to the conclusion that short of pressuring business through mass action no decision will be reached before the current session of parliament comes to a close," said COSATU general secretary Sam Shilowa.

"It is the considered view of COSATU Exco [Executive Committee] that the positions tabled by business are not a serious basis for negotiation, but are calculated to prevent agreement on a new Labour Relations Act [LRA] in 1995," said a May 28 Executive Committee statement.

"The proposals of business," the statement continued, "are out of line with the spirit of transformation contained in the draft LRA Negotiating Bill proposed by the government. In short, business is refusing to move into the democratic era... Examples of this are employer demands that they have the right to: lock out workers to force them to accept lower wages; sack workers in legal strikes; hide information on their profits; attack majority unions and create splinter unions in every workplace; ban union facilities like the closed shop; employ scab labor; and refuse to negotiate with unions at industry level."

COSATU spokesperson Neil Coleman, in a telephone interview from Johannes-

burg, said the union campaign would attempt to draw in workers from other trade union federations. Coleman reported that the Federation of South African Labor Unions, a grouping of historically white staff associations, has agreed to join the campaign.

"Beginning on June 5, there will be a whole series of regional actions, including a mass march in Johannesburg on June 6, and protests and demonstrations in factories," across the country, Coleman said.

## Burying apartheid labor law

The labor laws on the books in South Africa were drawn up under the apartheid regime. Through an explosion of working-class struggles beginning in 1976, and subsequent advances in the democratic revolution, workers' rights have been expanded. Prior to last year's first-ever non-racial elections, some of the new space that had been carved out was incorporated into the interim constitution.

The old laws codified the overriding goal of the apartheid state — the superexploitation of African labor by capital. Employers were given free reign in virtually every sphere, and workers' most basic rights, including the right to form trade unions and strike, were drastically limited.

The Labor Relations bill, unveiled by Labor Minister Tito Mboweni of the African National Congress, would establish a single code covering all workers and employers in South Africa for the first time. Previously, myriad labor codes governed the *bantustans*, different regions of the country, and different occupations. Domestic workers were not even covered under the old Labor Relations Act. The draft bill would establish basic rights in law, including the right to join and form trade unions and strike after a mediation



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Striking farmworkers, Northern Transvaal province, September 1994. New labor act would replace separate laws for farmworkers and millions in former bantustants.

period.

The draft labor legislation is currently under negotiation in the National Economic Development and Labor Council (NEDLAC), which brings together representatives of the labor movement, business, and government.

While COSATU supports many elements of the draft bill, it is demanding progress on several of its provisions, which the employers have not budged on.

The first is the right to strike. COSATU wants provisions in the legislation limiting employers' right to lock out workers. COSATU is demanding that the right to lock out be left out of the final constitution being drafted, and that the law should ban the use of scab labor.

COSATU wants the draft legislation to compel business to enter into centralized bargaining arrangements.

The federation also demands that the formulation in the bill on so-called work-

place forums be changed. The forums would be set up on a factory by factory basis, grouping representatives of management and workers. COSATU leaders have expressed concern that the current language concerning these forums would circumvent the trade unions and limit the issues around which workers can strike.

Labor minister Mboweni, who is pressing to get parliament to take up the legislation in its current sitting, scheduled immediate talks with labor and employers' representatives immediately following the call for mass action.

The South African Chamber of Business said COSATU was trying to exert undue pressure on business with the campaign and appealed to the federation to reconsider. It said mass action would have a negative effect on attempts to woo foreign investment. One employers' representative on the NEDLAC termed the planned action "dreadful."

# British gov't forced to talk to Sinn Fein in U.S.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

For the first time ever, London's chief minister for Northern Ireland was forced to sit down with the head of the dominant political force in the struggle against British rule in the north of Ireland. The May 24 meeting between Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams and British secretary for Northern Ireland Patrick Mayhew took place in Washington, D.C., just before a conference on trade and development in Northern Ireland. Adams had just wrapped up a 12-day tour, during which he addressed thousands of people in 14 cities across the United States and raised an estimated \$600,000 for Sinn Fein.

For months, Sinn Fein had been pushing for a meeting with Mayhew as a step toward all-party talks on the future of Northern Ireland. The British government had said it would not carry out such a high-level discussion, let alone consider broader negotiations that include Sinn Fein, until the Irish Republican Army (IRA) "decommissions" its weapons.

The pressure on London to back down is increasing, however, as supporters of the struggle for Irish self-determination stand firm and continue to take the political initiative. Just two weeks before the meeting in Washington, a British government minister, Michael Ancram, met with a leader of Sinn Fein, Martin McGuinness, for the first time in 23 years.

In response to Mayhew's insistence that the IRA disarm, Adams said, "We have consistently underlined our desire to see a complete demilitarization of the situation — that is the removal of repressive legislation, the release of all political prisoners, and the removal of all guns — British, unionist, loyalist, and republican — from Irish politics. To bring about, in the words of the English government, 'the decommissioning' of all weapons of war."

## 'End British rule in Ireland'

"The most urgent and important issue facing us all is to remove the causes of the conflict, to overcome the legacy of history, and to heal the divisions which have resulted," Adams continued. "Sinn Fein

seeks an end to British rule in Ireland. Our aim is a new and agreed Ireland."

Before the meeting, Adams called for an end to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, "the most repressive piece of legislation in Europe," which London had renewed the previous week. The law allows police to search and detain people on little or no evidence.

Addressing participants at the conference, U.S. president Bill Clinton urged "American businesses and all others to consider investing in Northern Ireland and the border counties" of the Republic of Ireland. This, he told the 300 U.S. businessmen gathered there, would create more jobs and "lift the despair that breeds violence."

## Cheap labor and tariff-free markets

U.S. commerce secretary Ronald Brown reviewed the more material reasons why U.S. companies might decide to set up shop in the north of Ireland. By doing so, he explained, they would gain tariff-free access to the 15-country European Union market and take advantage of a "large pool of educated, motivated, and English-speaking workers." The average hourly wage in Northern Ireland is 36 percent lower than that paid in the United States, he noted. U.S. companies that operate in Ireland have averaged a 25.8 percent annual return on investment — the highest in Europe — because of these factors and tax breaks from both the Dublin and Belfast governments.

By hosting the economic conference, Clinton hoped to take maximum advantage of the peace process in Ireland to open the door wider to U.S. capitalism in the region. All of the major political forces in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Britain were compelled to come, although after the meeting between Adams and Mayhew was announced, the two main pro-British parties in Northern Ireland declared they would not send their top leaders. Washington is trying to carve out a direct role for itself, separate from London, in determining the future setup in Ireland, north and south.

Clinton also announced plans to travel

to Ireland and the United Kingdom later this year, and pledged to ask the U.S. Congress to put more money into the International Fund for Ireland.

The big-business media in Britain were none too pleased with Adams's tour and the fact he was included at the Washington event. The May 27 London *Economist* complained, "For more than a year [Adams] has brilliantly exploited the support of Irish-Americans, the ignorance of the American media and the sympathies of Mr. Clinton to force the British government to concede to him, inch by inch, the same treatment accorded to Northern Ireland's other political leaders." Nevertheless, the magazine tried to insist, "Sinn Fein's future as a political party looks

bleak."

Meanwhile, political actions by supporters of Irish self-determination continue in Ireland. A new campaign, Dublin Against Royal Tour, is planning protests against an upcoming visit by Prince Charles to the Irish Republic. Paul O'Connor, an activist with the Pat Finucane Centre in Derry, Northern Ireland, explained the reason for the protest campaign. "At least 45 unarmed civilians have been shot dead by the Parachute Regiment of which Prince Charles is Colonel-in-Chief," he said. "Only one Para has been convicted of murder in the past 25 years, Pvt. Lee Clegg, and Prince Charles has added his name to the campaign calling for his release."

# Protests set at G-7 meeting

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — A coalition of some 50 groups in Halifax, Nova Scotia, is organizing a week of activities to protest the policies of the Group of Seven (G-7) heads of state, who are holding a summit meeting in that city on June 15-17. The G-7 includes the United States, Germany, Japan, France, Great Britain, Italy and Canada.

"We are organizing a People's Summit — P-7 we call it — to show that there are those who believe in alternative policies to what the G-7 leaders will be discussing," reports coordinator Sarah Shields.

The People's Summit coalition includes trade unions, women's rights groups, Cuba solidarity organizations, and groups which defend the rights of native peoples in Canada, Mexico, and Central America.

A series of workshops, conferences, and cultural events will run from June 10 to June 17. A demonstration against G-7 policies of cutbacks to social services and democratic rights will be held on one of the days the heads of state will be meeting.

Clara Alonoso Suárez of the Federation of Cuban Women and Paulina Mesa Cardenez and Barbara Sarria Aparicio of the National Union of Communication Work-

ers of Cuba are scheduled to speak at People's Summit events.

Keynote speakers at other events include Robert White, president of the Canadian Labour Congress, and Ed Broadbent, former leader of the New Democratic Party, a party based in the trade union apparatus in English-speaking Canada.

Representatives of the Innu people of Labrador will speak at one public forum. They are presently fighting against the use of their territory for low-level jet aircraft flight training by Canada and other member countries of the NATO imperialist military alliance.

"The G-7 leaders represent policies cutting health care, education, and other basic rights," said Sherri Cline of the Nova Scotia Cuba Association. "Cuba is maintaining a priority on these and other vital services for its people, despite tremendous economic difficulties they face."

"We think that Cuba is a model of development for other countries. That's why we want some voices of the Cuban people to be here during the Summit."

Roger Annis is a member of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada Local 841 in Montreal.



# Working class must set our own foreign policy

FT. MADISON, Iowa — Capitalism's parade of wars and famines seems to march daily across our TV screens and newspapers. Disgusted and overwhelmed by these never-ending catastrophes many wonder if it wouldn't be better to "turn our



Mark Curtis

backs" on the rest of the world and just worry about our "own problems" instead.

I agree that Washington should stop sticking its nose and its bayonets into the lives of the rest of humanity. I'll even go a step further and insist that this government quit messing us over here at home, too.

But it would be a big mistake for wage workers and family farmers to be ignorant or indifferent to what's going on around the globe. An even bigger error would be to put "America first," as the nationalistic politicians favor. When they say "let's take care of our own" they mean their

profit-grabbing machinery, first and last.

The truth is "Americans" aren't in this together. The capitalists want more capital and the working people want to do something besides just getting it for them. Workers want to be productive and use the wealth we create to educate ourselves, our children, and live free and healthy lives. "Workers of the world, unite" is a good slogan to live by to achieve that aim. If we don't unite, the capitalists, in their drive to acquire more capital, will send workers in their armies to kill one another. Again.

The working class must be keenly interested in international affairs. We need to make our own foreign policy, and come up with our own position on immigration and on war.



On the issue of war, nuclear war to be specific, all signs indicate that this terrible threat is growing. Led by the U.S. representative, the United Nations recently approved the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This fraud merely gives its blessing to the five governments (the United States, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, and China) that openly admit to having most of the bombs and have no plans to reduce their stockpiles. Meanwhile, Israel, India, Pak-

istan, and others also possess atomic bombs or are close to building them. Instead of a reduction or even "status quo" what we really have is proliferation and instability.

We are not on the verge of nuclear war, but combine these trends with trade wars like the one the U.S. government is heating up with Japan, for example, and then stir in the expanding shooting war in the ex-Yugoslavia, and armed conflicts flaring up in India, in the Middle East, and the old Soviet Union. All are in regions that have been made unstable because of capitalism and where various ruling classes possess nuclear weapons. It doesn't stretch the imagination to conclude that if a radical fascist-minded politician like Patrick Buchanan in the United States or Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in Russia came to power (and they are contending for power) limited nuclear warfare would not be unthinkable.



In promoting a working-class policy on immigration, we can look to an important fighter who recently died in March at the age of 99, Pedro González. González took part in the Mexican revolution, a great rebellion of peasants against their servitude to the landlords, and foreign capital. He later immigrated to the United States and

continued fighting for the rights of migrant workers and against racism.

González, a longshoreman, put the interests of workers ahead of any "nationalist" definition of toilers as "illegal immigrants," or other such nonsense. Through his talents as a singer and radio talk show host in Los Angeles, González fought against the deportations that scapegoated Mexicans for unemployment in the 1930s. For this he was targeted by the Los Angeles district attorney, who put together a frame-up case of rape that sent González to prison for six years.

The successful campaign to free him and his own organizing work in prison also provide important lessons in class solidarity and internationalism. The movie *Break of Dawn* dramatizes González's life and is a good educational tool for those who want to counteract Proposition 187 and other anti-immigrant laws.



Lastly, I would like to thank the many *Militant* readers whose letters and telegrams forced the prison authorities to release to me the pamphlet, *Why is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?* In holding it back I think they were testing the bonds of solidarity between us. Looks like those bonds are still pretty strong!

## L.A. clinic defenders defuse Operation Rescue

BY CAROLE LESNICK

LOS ANGELES — Abortion rights supporters in Los Angeles successfully out-mobilized Operation Rescue (OR) May 27 and kept abortion and family planning clinics in the area open.

The nationally organized anti-choice group had announced plans to blockade the clinics as a challenge to the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), which imposes federal penalties for blocking access to health clinics or intimidating people entering the facilities. Operation Rescue's trademark is harassing clinic patients and staff and attempting to physically shut down abortion clinics.

Mobilizing at 5 a.m., pro-choice forces set up defense lines at 10 clinics in the Los Angeles area where the abortion rights foes might show up. "A legal act where people exercise their right to control their bodies is threatened, and I find that scary," said a 25-year-old site leader at a Planned Parenthood clinic in the San Fernando Valley. She has defended clinics for five years, and added, "I plan to continue this work." The showdown with the anti-abortion rights forces occurred outside the entrance to the Clinica Medica Para la Mujer, located in a small mall in North Hollywood. The clinic serves a mostly Latino working-class population.

At the height of the confrontation Operation Rescue was outnumbered 300 to 70 by the highly organized contingent of abortion rights supporters who arrived at the clinic first and others who were called in for backup after OR arrived. At one point the anti-choice demonstrators surrounded clinic supporters guarding the

door, effectively blocking anyone from entering. The police took more than two hours to arrest the 25 people blocking access to the clinic doors.

The clinic defenders were able to safely escort some staff and patients inside, according to Katherine Spillar, national coordinator of the Feminist Majority Foundation. "The turnout was good, our tactical maneuvers came off without a hitch. I'm anxious to see prosecutions," Spillar said.

Among those arrested was Jeff White, the leader of OR California. A federal prosecutor cited in the *Los Angeles Times* would not comment on whether or not the demonstrators would be charged with violating FACE. Soon after the arrests, dozens of mounted police insisted on dispersing all demonstrators.

Some abortion rights activists see the FACE law as one step to protect women's rights. Others, however, point out that while the law is currently being used against antiabortion activity, it is dangerous because it can be applied to any kind of civil disobedience.

The strength shown by pro-abortion forces at the clinic door and in the large picket line adjacent to the clinic was inspiring to all who participated in the defense. Some participated for the first time, like 17-year-old Joanna Liebross, a student at Cleveland High School. "I support the cause and want to get out in the pro-choice movement," she said. "I'm a gay man who's been involved with a lot of civil rights things over the years," said clinic defender Tom Dichio. "More of us have to go out to events like these and speak up!"



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Abortion rights supporters defend a clinic from blockade attempt in N. Hollywood.

## NLRB sides with Caterpillar against fired UAW striker

BY ANGEL LARISCY

PEORIA, Illinois — One and a half years after being fired by Caterpillar Inc., United Auto Workers (UAW) member George Boze has learned that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is siding with the company and upholding his dismissal.

A committeeman at the Mossville technical center, Boze was fired in December 1993, after allegedly thumping a foreman with his finger during an argument. The union contends Boze was provoked by the supervisor as a part of the company's anti-union campaign.

The firing followed Boze's indefinite suspension in November, which triggered a four-day strike by the UAW and was one of the first of 163 unfair-labor-practice complaints now filed against the company by the union. The UAW is currently entering its 12th month on strike against Caterpillar. The union has been without a contract for more than three years.

"It's a disappointment that the judge ruled against us," Boze remarked. "But this ruling is not going to break the strike and it's certainly not going to break the union." Boze and the UAW have announced they will appeal the decision.

Other workers have expressed similar opinions on the importance of the decision. "You're going to win some in the

war and lose some in the war," said Joseph Tenuto, a UAW member with 22 years seniority at Cat's Mossville plant. Tenuto noted that he had been fired and won his job back on three separate occasions. "We're in a big fight with Caterpillar and it's not over yet."

In a move widely reported by the media as aimed at Caterpillar strikers the Illinois House and Senate recently voted to outlaw jack rocks — nails welded together in a tripod which can puncture tires. The legislation is now awaiting the governor's signature.

It stipulates that making or possessing a jack rock is punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. The media has publicized numerous stories of jack rocks scattered outside Caterpillar plants and strikebreakers' homes.

While winning some court fights, Caterpillar continues to face problems at its production facilities. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has recommended fines of \$15,000 for the company's defiance of a federal subpoena. OSHA has criticized the company for refusing to give its officials complete information about accidents and injuries that have occurred during the strike.

Angel Lariscy is a member of UAW Local 1494 in Peoria.

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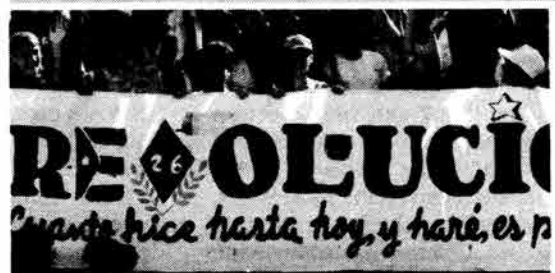
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# international campaign to win new readers



*Militant 2,950*  
*Perspectiva Mundial 675*  
*New International 1,200*

**sold 55%**  
**should be 80%**

## Two weeks left in sales drive: Big push needed for success

Continued from front page  
*Economic Crisis.*

Distributors of the *Militant* have been on a campaign to win new subscribers to the paper. Eight weeks into the effort 1,608 subscriptions to the *Militant* have been sold and 382 to the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with 701 copies of *New International*. This puts us at 55 percent of the international goals of selling 2,950 *Militant* and 675 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and 1,200 copies of *New International*. With only two weeks left until the scheduled end of the campaign June 11, a major effort must be organized to maximize the time supporters spend getting out to political events, going door to door, setting up literature tables in working-class communities and on campuses, and talking politics with co-workers to introduce new readers to the periodicals that take the side of working people.

The interest at recent international conferences in the ideas presented in the socialist press is further evidence that world events are creating more openings for advancing a working-class perspective on how workers and farmers can defend themselves against the economic crises, attacks on democratic rights and threats of war that we are facing. At the São Paulo Forum in Montevideo 11 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* were sold, as well as 14 copies of *Nueva Internacional*. Twenty-two people there also signed up to endorse Mark Curtis's fight to win freedom. Curtis is a unionist and political activist framed up in Iowa for his activity, including speaking out in defense of immigrant workers. He is now serving a 25-year prison sentence.

Distributors from Los Angeles to Auckland, New Zealand, have found this interest among immigrant workers fighting for their rights and Maoris seeking the right to their land. Many *Militant* supporters have had discussions about the widening of the war in Bosnia. For workers trying to figure out what stance to take on this and many other issues, the *Militant* is indispensable.

The socialist paper is also providing unmatched coverage of the resistance of working people in Latin America. Many first-time readers — especially workers trying to figure out how to fight against the employers' attacks — will not want to miss the next few weeks' coverage from Brazil and Argentina, as well as from revolutionary Cuba.

What is required in every city now is for distributors to map out a detailed plan to dispatch teams every day and take advantage of whatever time supporters of the *Militant* have to pitch in to make the campaign a success. In Houston nine campaigners sold seven *Militant* subscriptions, one to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and two *New Internationals* one Saturday, mostly going door to door in apartment complexes. The next day they participated in a march of about 200 in defense of immi-



*Militant* sales team at University of Georgia, Athens.

grant rights and protesting discrimination against Hispanics in Spring Branch, an area in Houston's northwest side. There they sold two subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. The successes they reaped from spending a good chunk of time out selling the socialist press have convinced them they can make their goals if they keep up that momentum. This means daily attention has to be paid to adjusting planned teams to the shifts and changes in supporters' schedules that occur.

*Militant* supporters in Houston and Los Angeles also reported on subscriptions sold as a result of keeping the local Pathfinder bookstores staffed. More readers of the *Militant* can be organized as volunteers to expand the hours these political centers are open in the next two weeks. In Los Angeles 24 *New Internationals* have been bought by bookstore customers since the start of the sales campaign. A union activist who attended the recent Labor Notes conference in Detroit visited the Cleveland Pathfinder bookstore last week to buy a subscription and the book *Lenin's Final Fight*, noting he thought *State and Revolution* by V. I. Lenin "was the best thing I ever read."

Distributors in Canada are planning to participate in the June 10-17 Peoples Summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and sell the *Militant* and other socialist publications there. The conference has been called by a range of activists to protest the policies of the imperialist powers in the Group of Seven, which will be meeting there that week. Readers who want to help get out the socialist press at this event should contact distributors in Montreal at the number listed on page 12.

Getting out to political activities and to events that draw large crowds in the summer weather can help provide places to reach receptive audiences. Cleveland

supporters sold three subscriptions at an African bazaar at Youngstown State University. They also participated in a pro-choice action against Operation Rescue along with students from Oberlin and Wooster colleges, one of whom bought a *Militant* subscription, and sold several more subs going door to door in the city.

Supporters of *Perspectiva Mundial* in Houston were invited to set up a table at a backyard fundraising party held in conjunction with a meeting to establish a network in solidarity with the peasant struggle in Chiapas, Mexico. In New York, supporters set up a table at a Dominican Mother's Day celebration that drew thousands upon thousands of people, where they sold two *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and several titles on the Cuban revolution.

In a number of areas *Militant* distributors are taking time off work to join teams that will spend a day or two setting up literature tables, visiting work sites, and campaigning for socialist candidates. Where this has been done, distributors report the response has been a great boost to making the local goals.

Houston distributors plan to field a team to New Orleans and meet some shipyard workers involved in an organizing drive and youth interested in the Young Socialists. Miami supporters plan on a second visit to Tampa, where there are also some youth interested in learning more about the Young Socialists organization.

Special all-day teams can be organized in every city where supporters are striving to make their goals, as well. This is the kind of effort that will be necessary to have an outgoing campaign spirit prevail in the coming weeks.

*Jerry Freiwirth in Houston and Roni McCann in Cleveland contributed to this article.*

	Militant			Perspectiva Mundial			New International		
	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%
Iceland	13	15	87%	0	1	0%	2	3	67%
Greece	7	10	70%	0	1	0%	4	4	100%
Sweden*	28	40	70%	10	15	67%	41	45	91%
Canada									
Toronto	58	85	68%	9	15	60%	29	45	64%
Vancouver	45	70	64%	7	8	88%	17	20	85%
Montreal	35	75	47%	6	25	24%	25	45	56%
Total	138	230	60%	22	48	46%	71	110	64%
Australia	21	40	53%	5	6	83%	11	15	73%
United States									
Atlanta*	73	90	81%	18	25	72%	12	25	48%
Seattle	67	90	74%	12	15	80%	20	25	80%
Los Angeles	132	180	73%	67	90	74%	66	90	73%
Houston	57	80	71%	11	15	73%	13	20	65%
Tucson	7	10	70%	1	2	50%	2	5	40%
Greensboro	48	70	69%	5	8	63%	10	20	50%
Peoria	33	50	66%	2	2	100%	11	20	55%
Washington, DC	51	80	64%	19	30	63%	25	35	71%
Boston	63	100	63%	9	30	30%	17	35	49%
Miami	65	105	62%	20	45	44%	41	60	68%
Salt Lake City	61	105	58%	12	20	60%	13	35	37%
Morgantown	31	55	56%	1	2	50%	6	20	30%
Detroit	48	95	51%	4	10	40%	15	28	54%
Twin Cities*	60	120	50%	20	22	91%	19	35	54%
Philadelphia	57	115	50%	9	30	30%	27	45	60%
San Francisco	74	150	49%	9	45	20%	61	75	81%
Des Moines	41	85	48%	14	36	39%	7	30	23%
Chicago	56	130	43%	14	30	47%	25	20	125%
Pittsburgh	45	105	43%	6	12	50%	9	30	30%
Brooklyn	50	130	38%	20	40	50%	49	65	75%
New York	51	135	38%	23	30	77%	39	75	52%
Cleveland	24	65	37%	10	12	83%	13	50	26%
Newark	41	130	32%	16	35	46%	18	60	30%
Birmingham	20	70	29%	5	5	100%	1	20	5%
Cincinnati	3	12	25%	0	2	0%	0	3	0%
New Haven		15	0%	0	3	0%	0	3	0%
Total U.S.	1258	2372	53%	327	596	55%	519	929	56%
New Zealand									
Wellington	8	10	80%	0	0	0%	2	4	50%
Auckland	40	80	50%	1	6	17%	8	20	40%
Christchurch	21	40	53%	2	2	100%	4	10	40%
Total	69	130	53%	3	8	38%	14	34	41%
Puerto Rico	1	2	50%	3	8	38%	3	5	60%
Britain									
Sheffield*	13	15	87%	1	1	100%	0	10	0%
London*	44	70	63%	8	8	100%	26	30	87%
Manchester	21	60	35%	1	4	25%	4	25	16%
Total	52	145	36%	8	13	62%	21	65	32%
France	4	10	40%	2	5	40%	15	20	75%
Belgium	0	3	0%	0	4	0%	0	10	0%
Other	17			2					
International	1608	2997	54%	382	705	54%	701	1240	56%
Should be	2360	2950	80%	540	675	80%	960	1200	80%
IN THE UNIONS									
AUSTRALIA									
AWU-FIME	1	2	50%	1	1	100%	0	0	0%
AMWU (Metal)	0	1	0%	0	1	0%	0	0	0%
Total	1	3	33%	0	2	0%	0	0	0%
CANADA									
IAM	9	11	82%	1	5	20%	2	5	40%
CEP	2	7	29%	0	1	0%	0	1	0%
USWA	1	6	17%	0	0	0%	0	3	0%
CAW	4	0	0%	2	0	0%	0	0	0%
Total	16	24	67%	3	6	50%	2	9	22%
NEW ZEALAND									
EU	3	5	60%	0	1	0%	1	2	50%
MWU		4	0%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
Total	3	9	33%	0	1	0%	2	3	67%
SWEDEN									
Foodworkers	0	2	0%	0	0	0%	3	4	75%
Metalworkers	1	2	50%	0	0	0%	2	2	100%
Transport	0	1	0%	0	0	0%	1	3	33%
Total	1	5	20%	0	0	0%	6	9	67%
U.S.									
UFCW	11	15	73%	5	25	20%	0	12	0%
IAM	53	75	71%	9	15	60%	9	33	27%
UTU	56	85	66%	2	7	29%	2	44	5%
UAW	61	100	61%	5	10	50%	27	40	68%
USWA	24	40	60%	1	3	33%	1	7	14%
ACTWU/ILGWU	18	30	60%	9	24	38%	1	18	6%
UMWA	10	23	43%	0	0	0%	0	12	0%
OCAW	23	55	42%	0	6	0%	8	25	32%
Total	256	423	61%	31	90	34%	48	191	25%
UNION TOTALS	276	462	60%	32	92	35%	54	203	27%

\*raised goal

ACTWU-Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU-Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AWU-FIME-Australian Workers Union; AMWU(Metal) Australian Workers Union; CAW-Canadian Auto Workers; EU-Engineers Union; IAM-International Association of Machinists; ILGWU-International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU-Meat Workers Union; NUM-National Union of Mineworkers; OCAW-Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT-National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU-Transport and General Workers Union; UAW-United Auto Workers; UFBGWU-United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; USWA-United Steelworkers of America; UTU-United Transportation Union.



# AFL-CIO shakeup shows rising discontent

## Socialist steelworkers assess moves by labor tops to defend their positions

BY TOM MALLETT

TORONTO — "There is a turn under way in the top levels of the AFL-CIO officialdom that is most sharply demonstrated in the moves to replace Lane Kirkland as president of the labor federation. The public discussion and pressure for him to resign is a reflection of widespread discontent among working people," said Greg McCartan in a report to socialists who are members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

The presidents of six of the biggest unions in the AFL-CIO are part of this campaign, he noted, including the Teamsters; United Auto Workers; International Association of Machinists; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Service Employees International Union; and the Laborers International Union. Top officials of the USWA are also part of this. Recognizing this shift is a way to get at what is happening in the ranks of labor today, McCartan said, and the openings that exist for doing communist work in the labor movement.

Members of the USWA who belong to the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and the Communist League in Canada held a one-day meeting here May 20, centered on the report by McCartan, a recent member of the union who has now taken on full-time responsibilities in the SWP.

McCartan pointed to the pressure on the union officialdom to protect the dues base from which they derive their privileges and social position. "Part of the rumblings also come from their lack of any leverage in bourgeois politics, which is part of the breakup of the liberal-labor coalition in the Democratic Party," he explained.

"Little of the labor officials' legislative program was adopted when Democrats controlled both the Congress and the White House. Now, officials of the USWA, Machinists, and others focus their fire on the 'right-wing' Republican agenda, rather than the ongoing bipartisan offensive."

Kirkland is criticized for his supposed focus on foreign policy questions. His detractors point out that he was abroad last year while the Senate was debating legislation to ban the use of permanent strike replacement workers, and again during the November elections. "This was a theme of Clinton's campaign against George Bush two years ago," McCartan said. "In some ways it's like the Clinton team fighting to get into the top leadership of the AFL-CIO two years after the election."

### Labor tops sense resistance will grow

"A layer of union officials sense that the signs of resistance coming from the ranks of labor to the continued assaults by the employers today are a harbinger of the future. They know the current leaders of the AFL-CIO can't keep a lid on the battles to come. They want the rank and file under their control, and workers doing what they are told by the union tops," explained McCartan. "Kirkland's opponents have a real instinct for self-preservation, not strug-

gle."

The resistance can be seen on a world scale, from France to South Africa to the Philippines, and to the United States. McCartan pointed to opportunities for unionists and socialist workers to get out to picket lines of UAW members on strike against Caterpillar, including a June 25 rally planned in Decatur, Illinois.



Strikers from Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone, and locked-out A.E. Staley workers march in Decatur, Illinois, October 1994. Union tops seek to contain labor militancy.

"Because the union leadership refuses to make any effort to mobilize working people to fight for jobs or to protest capitalist assaults on the social wage," McCartan said, "there is little identification among millions of union members with the top layers of the AFL-CIO. Kirkland's opponents say he has a bad image, doesn't pay attention to the rank and file and union organizing, can't talk workers' language, or even say something positive about workers."

AFSCME president Gerald McEntee says of the Kirkland team that "working people don't see them as championing their cause," adding, "anything is better than the status quo." This is echoed by the head of the Machinists union, George Kourpias, who says, "We're talking change." According to the May 9 *New York Times*, only Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers of America, has publicly said he will consider running against Kirkland.

McCartan further noted that these officials try to tap into the restiveness in the union ranks and draw militants into official posts. They hope to take these unionists' eyes off others in the rank and file, pretty up their own image, and make it appear that the union structures are changing for the better. This was reflected in the recent Labor Notes conference in Detroit, with about one-third of those in attendance

indicating they were union officials.

An unofficial "rank-and-file" election for Kirkland's replacement was held as part of the conference. Mine Workers president Trumka received the most votes, with Kirkland getting only five.

President Bill Clinton has also made some moves to shore up his image with workers, by speaking in favor of the

vice president put in charge of the USWA's campaign that ended with a contract and the 1,700 strikers getting their jobs back.

Since taking office he has appointed more Blacks and women to head internal departments and says this is to appeal more to the membership and those the union seeks to organize.

The USWA's declining dues base has forced Becker to lead a fight in the bureaucracy to downsize and consolidate the union's 18 districts into 9. The USWA now has a budget surplus, after being in the red for a number of years. The *Journal* article notes some of the problems the union faces: A 50 percent decline in membership since 1980, down to 564,900, and a number of failed organizing drives in the last year.

One of these was at AK Steel in Ohio, which is currently organized by a company union, the Armco Employees Independent Federation (AEIF). While the National Labor Relations Board ordered AK Steel to hold a new representation election because of misconduct in last year's vote, the Steelworkers have opted to work out a merger agreement with the AEIF rather than try to take on the company head on again.

The USWA officials have also moved to increase membership through a merger with the United Rubber Workers union (URW). The URW membership has fallen from nearly 200,000 in 1960 to about 94,000 now. While contracts for nearly half of its members are up in 1996, a 10-month strike against Bridgestone/Firestone has left the union's strike fund dry. "All the workers in our union are going to be involved, this is our struggle," Becker is quoted as saying in the *Journal*.

But shortly after Becker's tough talk the Rubber Workers strike went down to defeat as top officials of both unions pushed for an unconditional surrender to the company. With the strike called off workers are now at the mercy of Bridgestone/Firestone management waiting to be called back one at a time.

### New move by LTV Steel

Fighting talk is now being revved up in response to LTV Steel's plans to open a new mini-mill somewhere in the South. Rebuffed in attempts to discuss the status of the union at the new plant, union officials have suddenly "discovered" that LTV is at war with the union on this issue. Johanna Ryan, who works at an LTV plant in East Chicago, Indiana, described the cynicism that many of her co-workers have expressed toward union tops leading any fight to organize this new mill. "The union officials come off sounding like jilted brides, whining about how much they did to save LTV, and this is the thanks they get." She pointed out though that union members are still anxious for a fight. Sheila Ostrow, who works at an LTV mill in Pittsburgh, said that the union plans to have meetings to lay out a response to LTV's intransigence. "We need to attend those meetings, participate in the discussions, and cover them for the *Militant*," she urged.

McCartan explained that the more militant talk among the officials comes not out of responding to a big upturn in workers' struggles as in the 1930s when a split occurred in the AFL which led to the formation of the CIO, but rather their belief that it is now the only way to have any influence on the future and hopefully maintain their dues base. "They sense the coming fights and the mood of the ranks and want to get themselves in the best position to control it," he said.

### More opportunities to talk socialism

McCartan noted that what has opened up for socialists in the labor movement today is more opportunities to talk socialism with workers who want to fight and to bring experiences in politics outside the unions to co-workers. Central to this activity is what socialist workers can do to build local coalitions in solidarity with working people in Cuba, as they fight to defend their sovereignty, dignity, and revolution. McCartan pointed to the August

Continued on Page 11

from Pathfinder Press

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# Iowa farmers fight to keep protest sign

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA

RHODES, Iowa — On April 20, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) sent Larry Ginter a letter ordering him to either remove or relocate a sign on his property by May 22.

The wooden, hand-painted sign on Ginter's land, which sits on the edge of a corn field along Highway 330 between Des Moines and Marshalltown, reads, "BRANSTAD & HOG FACTORIES = ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL DAMAGE."

Terry Branstad is the governor of Iowa and is viewed by many working farmers as being in the pocket of large factory hog farm owners.

If Ginter refused to tear down or move the sign, the DOT said they would "enter upon the land as authorized by law and dispose of the sign and supports."

On May 22, the day the DOT's 30-day deadline for the sign's removal was up, Ginter, his mother, and more than 20 supporters held a press conference and rally to protest the state's attempts to remove the sign.

Despite intermittent rain, the rally was well covered by a number of local television stations and newspapers. As Ginter and several other working farmers spoke to the press and rally participants, their comments were punctuated by the sounds of cars on the highway that honked their

horns in support as they drove by.

Ginter and his supporters also erected a fence around the sign and vowed to fight any attempts to tear down the sign. If anyone crosses the fence, Ginter declared as he pounded fence supports into the muddy ground, "I'm calling it a violation of my rights and a trashing of the U.S. Constitution."

"Do we have a right to make a political statement on our own land?" Ginter asked the crowd that was gathered around the sign.

Farmer Gary Hoske, who has a similar sign in his yard, explained that the sign will "serve as a reminder of the environmental, economic, and social damage because of what the governor's done."

Ginter, secretary of the Iowa chapter of the American Agriculture Movement and an outspoken opponent of the large hog confinement facilities in the state, said he could not ignore the coincidence that for six months the DOT had nothing to say about his sign — until recent legislative debates began on hog confinement regulations.

The governor's office has attempted to counter the charges that the DOT's threat against the Ginter property is politically motivated. Branstad's spokesperson, Christine Martin, told the *Des Moines Register* that Branstad is on the side of small farmers. He received campaign do-



Larry Ginter (third from left) and others surround sign on his property during a recent protest rally. Iowa authorities are trying to force the farmer to take it down.

nations from corporate farms, but "they are a minute portion compared to the thousands of individual donations" he received, she claimed.

The DOT also told Ginter that his sign was advertising and as such, violated the state's laws on billboards. But Ginter discounts these claims, saying, "I wasn't advertising a damn thing. It's a political statement."

Ginter's fight has been publicized on local television news and radio, in the *Des*

*Moines Register* and the *Omaha World Herald*, as well as by an ABC-affiliated news radio station out of New York City. The *Register* editorial page also came out in support of Ginter's right to keep the sign on his property.

The day following the rally the Iowa Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit on Ginter's behalf in federal court.

Shirley Peña is a member of United Auto Workers Local 997 in Newton, Iowa.

# USAir workers angered by concession demands

BY EDWIN FRUIT

PITTSBURGH — USAir reached a tentative agreement recently with officials of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) as part of its program to slash labor costs by \$2.5 billion over five years. Similar agreements have been reached with the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) and the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA). Many workers are angered by the concession demands. USAir, which has been losing money for several years, claims it needs to cut wages and benefits to return it to profitability. "The clock is clearly ticking," Kevin Murphy, an airline stock analyst, warned March 27.

According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* March 28, "PNC Bank of Pittsburgh, the manager of USAir's cash reserves, recently gave the airline 30 days to put \$65 million in escrow to cover possible bank losses in the event of a bankruptcy filing." In communications to employees USAir management insists that the company is not on the verge of bankruptcy. Passenger revenues for March were the highest in the history of the company.

Some pilots are urging a rejection of the tentative agreement proposed by ALPA, which includes a 21.6 percent pay cut, layoffs, reductions in vacation, elimination of night pay and crew meals, and other give-backs. In a letter to the USAir ALPA magazine, *USAirwaves*, a pilot wrote, "My whole cumulative 17-year airline career with Eastern and now USAir has been a series of backward steps as my union has responded to Management's efforts to have me work for less... NO MORE. I am not a bank. I want to progress and if you want to represent me, it is your job to help the pilot profession and me, the line pilot, to progress, NOT continually regress."

The IAM-proposed agreements cover mechanics, cleaners, and stock clerks whose current contract expires in September 1995. They also apply to the fleet service workers — baggage handlers and caterers — who are negotiating their first contract, having just recently won a collective bargaining election. The proposed pact for the 8,000 mechanics, cleaners, and stock clerks, calls for a 12.9 percent wage reduction, elimination of the paid half-hour lunch, increasing the nonunion workforce at smaller stations, and layoffs.

At the Pittsburgh International Airport there is a lot of discussion on the proposals. Many mechanics, who are at the top end of the pay scale, are reluctantly voicing acceptance of the tentative agreement. "I'll give this time," one said. "But they

better not come back for more later." Another mechanic said, "I thought the proposals would be worse. But what can we do. If we don't take the concessions the company will go to bankruptcy court and impose even worse conditions."

Other mechanics, however, passed out a flyer showing that losing the half-hour paid lunch, over a year's time, amounted to a pay cut of 20.2 percent rather than the 12.9 percent announced.

## 'Been down this road before'

Eddie Croft, a cleaner and former Eastern Airlines striker, said, "I've been down this road before. Once you give concessions, they come back for more. It's not as bad as I thought but giving anything is a bad precedent."

Financial analysts seem to agree. In the March 28 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Claire Kendrick, a bond analyst, is quoted as saying, "the problem here is... unions throw soft dollar concessions, otherwise known in the industry as fluff. All told, we think, we're only likely to end up with \$300 million in hard dollars and the rest in fluff, the problem being that this time next year they'll be back asking for concessions."

Cleaners at USAir hired after the October 1992 contract are on a C-scale. They start at \$3.40 less than those preceding them and don't reach parity for five years. Many are making 50 percent of the wages that others are getting — doing the same job. Lower-tier workers are also being asked to take the same pay cuts as higher-paid workers. "It's an injustice," Don Logan, a cleaner with two years at USAir said. "The company and the union don't care about the younger workers. It's taken two years to get a \$1.25 raise and now they're taking it away."

"I've been with the company for five years and now I'll be making less than \$8 an hour," Susan Wright, who transferred from customer service to a cleaner position, said. "I could just as well be working at McDonald's."

## First union contract

Many fleet service workers are not pleased with the proposals for their first contract, either. In the past four years, USAir arbitrarily imposed a whole series of concessions on this group, reducing benefits, doing away with accumulated sick pay and holiday pay, and forcing many full-time workers into part-time status. In smaller stations up to 70 percent of the workforce is part-time. In the bigger hubs close to 40 percent are working part-time. These workers have to swap shifts fre-

quently in order to make up enough hours to get the equivalent of full-time pay.

Union representatives promised new members a contract in which they would begin to move forward and start to reach equity with the other IAM members. In the opinion of many the proposed agreement falls far short. Fleet service workers are being asked to take a 10 percent cut in pay; part-time work will continue to be as high as 40 percent system-wide. Swaps will now be limited to 80 a year. "The union promised it would turn our situation around. With what's being offered, part-timers with up to 10 years with the company will never see full-time jobs," Lou Knoll, a shop steward, said.

In Philadelphia, there are signs up in the break rooms of baggage handlers saying, "Call the IAM Hotline. Tell them you're pissed off. Leave a message." In Pittsburgh another baggage handler expressed his opinion sharply: "The company has been knifing us in the back for the past four years. I consider this an 'apartheid' contract because we're still second class citizens compared to the mechanics."

"There are things I don't like about the proposed contract for fleet service. But we owe it to the IAM to give them a chance to put the whole thing in writing," said Ron Kutzavitch, a baggage handler with nine years at USAir who has been forced into part-time work. "We need to read it, dis-

cuss it, and have a chance to ask questions before we vote."

The unions are not likely to vote on these proposals before the summer. It will take the agreement of the memberships of the three unions and the pilots association at USAir — ALPA, IAM, AFA, and the Transport Workers Union, which organizes the dispatchers, before any contracts are put into effect. In addition, USAir stockholders, including British Air, which has a 24 percent stake, must approve the agreements along with approving profit sharing, union seats on the board of directors, and the unions getting 20 percent of the company's equity.

Unionized workers represent some 28,000 employees at USAir. Our ability to resist a further deterioration of our standard of living will depend on how much we can bust through the company's strategy to divide us and present other airline workers who might be slightly better off as the culprits. Although resistance to USAir's demands is modest at this point, some actions and the wide-ranging discussion show that workers are capable of waging this fight.

Edwin Fruit is a member IAM Local Lodge 1976 at USAir in Pittsburgh. Deborah Liatos, a member of IAM Local 1776 at USAir in Philadelphia, contributed to the article.

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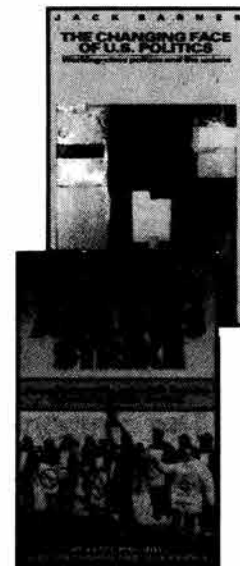
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# 'Anti-imperialist consciousness is needed'

## Cuban leader presents revolutionary perspective at fifth São Paulo Forum

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL  
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay — Political parties from around Latin America and the Caribbean gathered here May 25-28 for the fifth meeting of the São Paulo Forum. The first such gathering was held in 1990 in São Paulo, Brazil, at the initiative of the Workers Party in that country.

The previous conference of the São Paulo Forum was held two years ago in Havana, hosted by the Communist Party of Cuba. Meetings were also held in 1991 in Mexico City and in 1992 in Managua, Nicaragua.

About 160 delegates and observers participated in this year's gathering, including representatives of 73 organizations from 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries; a third of these participants were from Argentina. Among the 32 observers from other parts of the world were several from parties in western Europe and Australia, as well as representatives of the Kurdish Workers Party and of the governing parties in Vietnam, North Korea, and Libya. Representatives from Sinn Féin of Ireland attended for the first time. Two organizations from North America, the Socialist Workers Party and Solidarity, were also present as observers.

The presence of two representatives of the Basque nationalist party Herri Batasuna sparked a great deal of publicity in the Uruguayan media because of an ongoing controversy here over the extradition last year of three Basque political activists accused of "terrorism" by the Spanish government. Trials are now pending against several people who were arrested last August in Montevideo during a series of rallies demanding asylum for the three refugees. The cops fatally shot one demonstrator during those actions. The Communist Party of Spain decided not to send its representatives to the meeting once the attendance of Herri Batasuna was confirmed.

This year's meeting was smaller than previous gatherings. Delegates from Guadeloupe and Puerto Rico noted that, unlike the Havana conference, which was 400-strong, there was no one present from the English-speaking Caribbean. Also absent were organizations such as the Revolutionary Democratic Party of Panama and the Lavalas movement of Haiti, both of which are now in government.

### Two distinct political courses

Since the last meeting of the São Paulo Forum, one of the biggest developments in the Americas has been the economic catastrophe in Mexico following the devaluation of the peso last December. The shock waves have shaken countries throughout the continent. This crisis was the backdrop for the discussion at the conference on what organizers termed "the struggle against neoliberalism," referring to capitalist government policies that remove protectionist measures and open up semicolonial economies to freer imperial-

ist investment.

As with the previous conferences, two distinct political courses were presented in the discussion — one oriented to seeking reforms in the capitalist system through electoral politics, and the other a socialist perspective.

The clearest and most forceful voice advocating a revolutionary course was the Cuban Communist Party. In a major speech at a public meeting inaugurating the conference, Abel Prieto, a member of the party's Political Bureau, stated that to some, "it seems to be in bad taste to speak about imperialism today."

Prieto went on to describe some of the devastating consequences that the capitalist economic crisis and imperialist pillage has meant for working people in the continent: growing unemployment, impover-

He pointed out that "in 1995, the voices of the prophets of the fall of Cuban socialism have been muffled."

To confront the current economic crisis, "we have had to postpone advances toward our goal of building socialism," he said, citing a number of recent economic measures taken by the Cuban government such as opening up agricultural markets at unregulated prices and allowing foreign investments in tourism, oil, mining, and other sectors of the economy. "But these must not be confused with the restoration of capitalism" in Cuba, Prieto said. He explained how millions of working people on the island had taken part in "workers parliaments" in their workplaces to discuss and express their opinions on these economic measures when they were proposed — "a true example of democracy."



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

**Youth protest Argentine government austerity. Cuban representative urged others to refute fallacy that Latin America is advancing along path of development.**

ishment, disease, malnutrition, and social polarization. He denounced "the implacable weapon of the foreign debt," through which Washington and other imperialist powers squeeze workers and farmers. The foreign debt stood at \$534 billion by the end of 1994.

In face of these conditions, "social explosions are multiplying" throughout the region, Prieto underlined. "Never before has there been such a need for a clear anti-imperialist consciousness." In clear reference to the U.S. invasion of Haiti, he added, "the imposition of economic and financial demands is accompanied by the use of the United Nations to give a legal face to intervention and to establish the concept of limited sovereignty."

In contrast, Prieto explained, revolutionary Cuba has met its current economic problems with "dignity and resistance."

Cuba, Prieto concluded, "will emerge victorious with a vigorous socialism based on the ideas of Martí, Che, Fidel, Marx, Engels, and Lenin."

Prieto received an enthusiastic ovation from the audience at the public meeting, reflecting the enormous prestige and attraction of the Cuban revolution in Latin America and around the world.

During discussion at the plenary sessions and workshops, a few other delegates, such as the representative of the New Independence Movement (formerly the Puerto Rican Socialist Party), cited the Cuban revolution as an example, and many denounced the U.S. trade embargo against the island.

### Procapitalist forces

The procapitalist forces, however, continued to gain predominance in the Forum. Much of the discussion centered on their efforts to get elected into capitalist governments. These forces were led by the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) of Mexico and the Broad Front of Uruguay.

The elections held in 14 Latin American countries in the past two years represented "the best overall achievements of the left in the history of Latin America," stated Marco Aurélio Garcia, international relations secretary of the Workers Party (PT) of Brazil, at the first plenary session. The Final Declaration adopted by the conference highlighted the fact that member parties of the São Paulo Forum now have more than 360 members of parliament and dozens of mayors, governors, and city council members in office throughout the continent.

Several delegates held up the recent electoral gains of the Broad Front, which hosted the conference, as an example to follow. The Front, a coalition of mostly social-democratic and other parties that function in the workers movement of Uruguay, won 30 percent of the vote in parliamentary elections last year. Its slate

also won the mayorship in the city of Montevideo, with about half of Uruguay's population of 3 million, for a second term. Conference participants attended a meeting at City Hall with Mayor Mariano Arana, who stated that the "classic socialist models" had failed and that, instead, the workers movement should fight for "democracy," "modernization," and "a better state and a better market."

The fifth meeting of the Forum, which had been scheduled to take place in Montevideo in 1994, was postponed until this year because of the election campaign in Uruguay.

In his address to the inaugural event, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, PRD candidate in last year's presidential elections in Mexico, said "orthodox neoliberalism" was to blame for the plunge of the peso and its repercussions.

To deal with the economic crisis, "the solution does not lie in crossing swords with the North," he emphasized, referring to Washington, "but in regional integration." This was described by Cárdenas and others at the conference as a Latin American trading bloc to compete with other commercial blocs in the world.

Schafik Handal, representing the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador, stated that the policies of the Salvadoran government "are only supported by the financial oligarchy," which he said exploits both peasants and big landowners. Handal called for an alliance "not only of working people but of sections of the middle and big businessmen."

The FMLN recently consummated a split. Some of its member organizations have formed the Democratic Party as a more openly capitalist party. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Nicaragua, which has also continued to shift to the right, has likewise undergone a split.

### Capitalism doesn't equal democracy

In one of the conference workshops, Roberto Regalado of the Cuban CP answered the numerous delegates who spoke about "strengthening the process of democratization" in the Americas. "To deal with the problems in our region, it is necessary to refute two fallacies," he said. "One is that the subcontinent is advancing along the path of growth, economic development, and social justice. The other is the assertion that it is undergoing a consolidation of democracy."

Regalado asked, "Can democracy exist in the middle of increasing inequality and injustice? Can there be democracy in countries that are increasingly more dependent and less sovereign?"

A few delegates spoke about the upturn in workers' and peasants' struggles in many countries of the region against the capitalists' attacks. The peasant revolt in Chiapas, Mexico, was frequently cited. Luis Puig of the People's Victory Party of Uruguay highlighted "the importance of the resistance to neoliberalism—in Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina. Left organizations cannot be divorced from these struggles."

As the conference took place, a major strike by oil workers in Brazil was unfolding (see article beginning on front page). PT leader Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva canceled his participation in the conference in order to help respond to that fight. Garcia of the PT spoke at the meeting about the struggle of the oil workers.

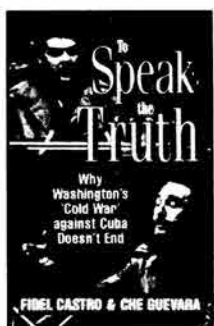
Earlier, thousands of teachers and other workers had carried out a general strike in Bolivia against the policies of the regime, which imposed a state of siege and arrested at least 300 unionists. In Argentina, several provinces have been swept by strikes and other demonstrations against wage cuts and layoffs.

A delegate from the Communist Party of Paraguay reported on a series of peasant land takeovers as well as a strike by telephone workers that forced the parliament there to grant a wage raise to the state employees.

Protests against government austerity measures have also been shaking

**Continued on next page**

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# Brazil oil workers

Continued from front page

als, opinion columns, and cartoons, as well as hours of television news broadcasts and talk shows paint the strikers as well-paid employees who oppose "modernization" of an inefficient state-run monopoly at the expense of the vast majority of the population. Government officials are trying to use the hardships caused by rationing of the dwindling supplies of gasoline and cooking gas to undercut the prestige of the fighting workers. Photos of impoverished Brazilians standing in line to fill tanks of cooking gas appear on many front pages of newspapers.

Strikers at Cubatão reported that anonymous leaflets have circulated in industrial areas claiming that union officials are hoarding gasoline or liquid gas at the offices of the United Federation of Workers (CUT), to which oil workers are affiliated.

When Petrobrás began selectively firing union activists, workers responded by circulating a petition among the union membership demanding that all 47,000 employees be dismissed or no one. The response to this union counterpropaganda campaign has slowed down government efforts to carry out large-scale firings of union militants. So far, the company has fired 93 workers for strike-related activities.

The union has also produced flyers and placards with photocopies of workers' paychecks that show that their take-home pay ranges between \$300 and \$800 a month. The media often claim that the median wage of oil workers is \$1,900. The union brochures contrast that to the salary of the governor of São Paulo, who recently got the state legislature to grant him \$38,000 a month.

The 400 workers who occupy the plant, which has a striking workforce of 1,500, do maintenance during the day to make sure the refinery is not damaged while the strike continues.

"This strike is not just about pay," said Aelson Mota Brito. "Cardoso is imposing the same policies as the governments in Argentina, Mexico, and Bolivia. They're turning over our national patrimony to multinationals for the price of bananas. We're not going to let him do what Menem already accomplished."

"Our strength is in our numbers, our unity, and solidarity from other workers," Jenner added.

Leading up to the army occupation of the four refineries, short walkouts in solidarity with the embattled unionists were organized by dock workers, truckers, railworkers, teachers, and others. This strike movement has slowed down for the moment.

At Cubatão, however, the union organizes nightly plant-gate solidarity rallies from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. often attended by hundreds of workers.

On the night of May 30, steelworkers from nearby Santos bring a truckload of food. Representatives of the bank workers union bring copies of a video they just made on the oil strike. They are using the video to spread the truth about the struggle and to raise funds for the strikers. Two members of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers report their group is orga-

nizing a solidarity march in the city of Itanuba.

Stefano Giuseppe Maria Narici, from the Paulina refinery, receives the loudest applause when he brings news from the solidarity camp near his plant, which is occupied by the army.

"This is the longest and most important strike we've ever had," says Vicente Medosa de Lima, 72, who retired in 1988 after working 37 years in the plant. "I helped to found this union. And we're not about to back down."

## 'Valley of struggle'

The next morning two steelworkers drive *Militant* reporters toward the huge Cosipa steel complex in Santos, a few miles south of Cubatão. Both cities are in a coastal valley surrounded by steep, lush mountains. The valley is dotted by smokestacks spewing fumes from dozens of mills, fertilizer plants, and plastics and cement factories.

"We call this 'the valley of death' because of the tremendous pollution," the driver says. "But now it is becoming valley of struggle."

"Brazilian capitalists bought the Cosipa plant from the state in 1993," says Paulo Tavares dos Santos, communications director of the metal workers union in the region. "Since then, they cut the workforce from 15,000 to 10,000 and at the same time raised production to record levels. The result? Occupational accidents have increased. Ten workers were killed on the job last year."

"We support the oil workers because we were victims of the same policy they are facing now," Tavares says.

During the afternoon shift change, metalworker union activists distribute thousands of flyers on the oil strike to Cosipa employees. The flyers, stuffed in plastic bags, encourage workers to fill these with food and drop them at the plant gate the next morning for the oil strikers.

Inside the mill, not everyone supports the strike. "I don't think the strike is just," said Marcos Ferrer, 21, who works at the plant kitchen and takes home \$130 a month. "Those people at the refinery make a lot of money. What's in that strike for me?"

## UJC builds Cuba festival in Brazil

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

CUBATÃO, Brazil—Three members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba were enthusiastically welcomed here May 31 when they visited oil workers occupying a Petrobrás refinery.

The three are part of a delegation of 30 UJC members who are in Brazil to get out the truth about the Cuban revolution and build the "Cuba Lives" International Youth Festival called for August 1-7 in Havana and other parts of the island. Félix López, 29, is a reporter for *Juventud Rebelde*, the UJC's weekly newspaper. Jany Mayor, 22, is a worker at a cooperative farm in Havana province. Alfredo Díaz, 27, is a UJC leader in a rural town in Holguín province.

Several delegates expressed opposition to the proposed expulsion, saying it could lead to the breakup of the Forum, since other member parties occupy government positions and might also face demands for expulsion.

Similarly, a proposal was made by the Revolutionary Workers Party of Mexico and a few other groups to change the rules of the Forum in order to reject the request by the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to attend the meeting as an observer. In the end, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to reject the two motions.

A Final Declaration adopted at the end of the meeting said the delegates "solidarize with our Cuban brothers and condemn the criminal blockade imposed by the U.S. government" and denounced the Helms-Burton bill, which would tighten Washington's embargo.



Brazilian army troops patrol outside refinery on the outskirts of São Paulo

"We still have a lot of work to do to win a solid majority on the side of the strikers," acknowledged Saulstiano Tavares do Santos, who has worked at Cosipa for 30 years. He said the union had to postpone plans for a solidarity work stoppage at the complex until more support is won. The union, he added, needs to address the concerns of low-paid workers by raising demands such as for a higher minimum wage, which now stands at \$100 in Brazil.

Some 3,000 port workers at Santos, however, held a two-hour work stoppage in solidarity with the oil workers May 31.

A dozen steelworkers joined strikers and others for a spirited plant-gate rally of 300 at the Cubatão refinery later that evening.

Speakers included the president of the National Union of University Students, who brought a \$3,000 check for the strike fund, and a state deputy from the Workers Party (PT).

A group of 10 high-school students from Santos were the loudest in cheering all announcements of new solidarity actions. "Today we spent the whole day in the street passing out flyers we made on the strike and collecting funds," said Rogerio Messias, 16, from the Municipal Union of High School Students.

Oil workers erupted in cheers when Dirceu Travesso, from the national executive committee of CUT, announced that dock workers in Rio de Janeiro had decided to refuse to unload any shipments of imported oil derivatives during the strike.

The high point of the evening came when Félix López, a member of the Cuban Union of Young Communists (UJC) and reporter for the Cuban weekly *Juventud Rebelde* (Rebel Youth), addressed the assembly. López and two other UJC members had spent the day at the valley with metal and oil workers. The three are part of a delegation of more than 30 Cuban youth leaders visiting Brazil to talk about the Cuban revolution today.

"I come from a country that has no oil but that nationalized the foreign-owned refineries 36 years ago and since then they've been in the hands of the Cuban people," López said, drawing a boisterous ovation. "You can count on our support."

The strikers responded with repeated chants of "Brazil, Cuba, Central America; the working class is international."

To send messages of support contact United Federation of Oilworkers (FUP) at: Ave. Passos, 34, 3 andar, Centro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, CEP 20051-040. Tel: (21) 221-209. Fax: (21) 221-1266.

## 'Anti-imperialist consciousness is needed'

Continued from previous page

Nicaragua. FSLN leader Daniel Ortega did not attend the meeting because of a major confrontation that broke out between the regime and trade unions.

Much of the debate at the Montevideo meeting became mired down by proposals by a few delegates to exclude certain parties from the São Paulo Forum. The Workers Party of Argentina made a motion to expel the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL) from membership in the Forum because it is part of the regime that unleashed the recent repression against the Bolivian labor movement. During the discussion, MBL representative Alfonso Alem Rojo defended his party's decision to join the government in 1993, as well as the imposition of the state of siege in April of this year, arguing that the unions had "provoked the government."

At a strike rally at the refinery's main gate, the three Cuban youth leaders were pleasantly surprised to find that a group of 10 high school students were also there to show their support for the oil strikers. "We heard about the youth festival in Cuba and we're planning to go," said Mauro Max. He is the president of the Municipal Union of High School Students in the nearby city of Santos.

López, Mayor, and Díaz had already visited a number of colleges, high schools, and other places to publicize the festival. "We were invited to speak before a class at one high school. Students asked us a lot of questions about Cuba, which they didn't know much about. Even the teacher was surprised to learn that Cuba had

wiped out illiteracy in the early years of our revolution," said one.

At most of these campus meetings, several students expressed interest in traveling to Cuba for the festival. In addition, the National Student Union and other youth groups are planning to charter a plane to Cuba to take part in the event.

The 30 UJC activists have fanned out to several states in Brazil. López said that seeing the conditions working people face here made a big impression on him. Among other places, he visited a *favela*, as the huge slums in Brazilian cities are known.

"There is such a contrast between wealth and poverty," López remarked. "We saw both modern skyscrapers and lots of people living on the streets of São Paulo. You have to see capitalism to really understand what it is."

The Cuban youth leaders are planning to meet with members of the Movement of Rural Landless Workers who have expressed interest in going to the festival.

Meanwhile, UJC leaders are traveling throughout the world to build the Cuba Lives event. Victoria Velásquez, the organization's first secretary, just completed a successful tour in Chile. The UJC's first secretary in Holguín province, Francisco Pérez Batista, is now traveling through several Central American countries. Another UJC activist is on a similar tour in Australia and New Zealand.

At the May 25-28 conference of the São Paulo Forum, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, brochures on the festival were widely distributed by members of the Cuban delegation and other participants. A number of youth from Uruguay and Argentina said they planned to start raising money to send delegations to Cuba.



# McNamara hopes to bury Vietnam syndrome

**In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam**, by Robert McNamara with Brian VanDeMark. 414 pp. New York: Times Books/ Random House, 1995. \$27.50.

BY PETE SEIDMAN

Robert McNamara wrote *In Retrospect* more with an eye on the future than the past. McNamara, who was secretary of defense under presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson from 1960-67, explains he has "grown sick at heart witnessing the cynicism and even contempt with which so many people view our political institutions and leaders.... It is cynicism that

massive effort on an inherently unstable foundation. External military force cannot substitute for the political order and stability that must be forged by a people for themselves."

There was no U.S. strategy that could transform the reactionary, corrupt puppet government Washington imposed on one half of Vietnam into a force capable of winning the "hearts and minds" of the people. The Saigon regime in the south, based as it was on the wealthy hangers on of imperialism and the landlords in the countryside, was incapable of meeting

Ho Chi Minh trail, as well as their ability to "recruit" in numbers far exceeding the casualties inflicted by U.S. forces. One of the key lessons of Vietnam, he writes, is that, "We failed...to recognize the limitations of modern, high-technology military equipment, forces, and doctrine in confronting unconventional, highly motivated people's movements."

In November 1967, McNamara submitted a memo to Johnson outlining his misgivings along these lines. He was obviously also alarmed by the growth of anti-war mobilizations and sentiment among

liberateness with which Kennedy decided on the 1961 invasion of the island at the Bay of Pigs.

As it turned out, McNamara says, the attempted invasion was a "perfect failure." The strength of the Cuban revolution and the extent of international solidarity it had earned clearly surprised Washington. McNamara noted that, "contrary to CIA predictions, the Cuban people did not rally in support of the invasion; Castro marshaled forces in the area more quickly and in greater numbers than anticipated.... Washington's hand in the operation, once exposed, aroused global indignation...."

## 'National unity'

McNamara peddles the idea that if only the president had taken the need to pursue the carnage in Vietnam to Congress for a debate then they could have created the conditions needed to unify the country behind the war.

Such a debate, "must be done — even if a divisive vote risks giving aid and comfort to our adversary," he insists. "We did not do it, and we would learn the hard way that a government must accept that risk in order to lead a united country into war and maintain support. Instead of working toward unity, we chose to sweep the debate under the Oval Office carpet. Are we wiser today?"

McNamara seems to think so, applauding the campaign orchestrated by the Bush administration prior to Washington's war against Iraq: "Before President Bush began combat operations against Iraq, he sought — and obtained — Congress's support (as well as that of the U.N. Security Council)."

"President Bush was right. President Johnson, and those of us who served him, were wrong."

U.S. forces slaughtered more than 150,000 Iraqis during the Persian Gulf war. Washington did this to tighten its grip on Mideast oil — at the expense of its imperialist rivals in Germany and Japan. McNamara boasts of this brutal slaughter as an example of a well-managed war, blessed by the charade of congressional debate.

But the superficial unity orchestrated by Washington prior to the Persian Gulf war would not have lasted had the fighting gone on for a greater length of time. In such a situation, Bush knew, U.S. casualties would have quickly mounted. The antiwar actions that had flared up on the eve of the war could again have caught fire.

Despite their boasts of achieving "national (and even international) unity," U.S. rulers knew they had only postponed a debate on the war with the congressional and United Nations charades, strict media censorship, and yellow ribbons.

McNamara also misstates the case when he claims Johnson was able to "sweep the debate under the Oval Office carpet" during Vietnam. Despite the administration's best efforts to avoid it, or at least contain it within a housebroken Congress, there was a deep going national debate during the war in Vietnam. The war makers' problem was that they not only couldn't prevent this debate, but they lost it!

A massive antiwar movement developed that successfully reached out to soldiers and accelerated the crumbling of military morale that actually threatened the ability of the Pentagon to continue fighting the war.

But this is the story McNamara hopes to hide and the impact of the movement is what he aims to help fade away. The real history of the war is a lesson in the horrors the war makers in Washington are capable of unleashing to defend their system, but it is also a lesson in the powerful impact a movement of working people the world over can have.

The 20th anniversary of the victory of the Vietnamese people is a good opportunity to spend some time studying those lessons. While McNamara's book won't help much, there is a book that does give a real account of Washington's policies in the war and of the role of the Vietnamese and the masses of antiwar protesters who helped bring an end to the carnage. Pick up *Out Now! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the United States Against the Vietnam War* by Fred Halstead, published by Pathfinder Press.

## IN REVIEW

makes Americans reluctant to support their leaders in the actions necessary to confront and solve our problems at home and abroad."

Far from being an apology for U.S. imperialism's war in Indochina — a war resulting in the deaths of more than 3 million Vietnamese as well as 58,000 U.S. combat troops — McNamara hopes to diminish the continuing political limitations on Washington's ability to engage in future wars. The skepticism of the government's justifications for interventions and wars, and the distrust of the officer corps came to be known as the Vietnam syndrome, and the many negative reactions to McNamara's book are one indication that it has not been overcome.

McNamara, who served until 1981 as president of the World Bank after leaving the Johnson administration, foresees not a stable "New World Order," but a future of "conflict, between disparate groups within nations and extending across national borders."

He goes on, "Racial, religious, and ethnic tensions will remain. Nationalism will be a powerful force across the globe. Political revolutions will erupt as societies advance. Historic disputes over political boundaries will endure. And economic disparities among nations will increase as technology and education spread unevenly around the world. The underlying causes of Third World conflict that existed long before the Cold War began remain now that it has ended. They will be compounded by potential strife among states of the former Soviet Union and by continuing tensions in the Middle East."

## U.S. errors in Vietnam

For McNamara, the Vietnam War was wrong because the U.S. government lost. He writes to better prepare his successors to prevail where he and his cohorts in war crimes failed:

"We both overestimated the effect of South Vietnam's loss on the security of the West and failed to adhere to the fundamental principle that, in the final analysis, if the South Vietnamese were to be saved they had to win the war themselves. Straying from this central truth," McNamara counsels, "we built a progressively more



An Oct. 21, 1967, antiwar protest drew 100,000 and some 30,000 joined a march on the Pentagon. Above, antiwar veterans leaflet military police guarding the Pentagon.

popular demands for land reform and democracy.

From their starting point of "stopping Communism," McNamara, Kennedy, Johnson, and Richard Nixon had no choice but to fill the resultant political vacuum with U.S. troops and firepower.

And so they did, dropping more bombs on Vietnam than were dropped anywhere in the world in all previous wars combined. Massive U.S. bombing continued almost up to the very end of the war, even after formal peace talks opened up in 1971.

But the people of Vietnam, in the north and the south, never let up their heroic resistance.

## McNamara goes

McNamara's generals repeatedly claimed that with just a few thousand more troops, "victory would be just around the corner." He never denied them.

But he did become increasingly skeptical.

He was consistently confounded by the ability of the liberation forces to maintain supply lines through the heavily bombed

the American people. No doubt the peaceful march of more than 30,000 people on the Pentagon the month before had made its mark on him. "I watched the whole thing from the roof of the building," his version goes. "Of course I was scared: an uncontrolled mob is a frightening thing."

He wrote Johnson: "...the American public, frustrated by the slow rate of progress, fearing continued escalation, and doubting that all approaches to peace have been sincerely probed, does not give the appearance of having the will to persist. As the months go by, there will be both increasing pressure for widening the war and continued loss of support for American participation in the struggle. There will be increasing calls for American withdrawal."

"There is, in my opinion, a very real question whether under these circumstances it will be possible to maintain our efforts in South Vietnam for the time necessary to accomplish our objectives there."

Johnson and the majority of his advisers rejected McNamara's hesitations. One quipped that, "the author of the memo had probably seen too many protest marches." A month later, McNamara learned he would be starting a new job at the World Bank.

## Fear of new Cubas

McNamara explains what the rulers feared "that underlay our involvement in Vietnam."

"At the time," he states, "Communism still seemed on the march. Mao Zedong and his followers had controlled China since 1949 and had fought with North Korea against the West; Nikita Khrushchev had predicted Communist victory through 'wars of national liberation' in the Third World.... And now Castro had transformed Cuba into a Communist beachhead in our hemisphere. We felt beset and at risk...."

What left the Camelot crowd feeling so "beset" was the post-World War II rise of popular struggles for national liberation during the 1950s and 60s that swept countries from Asia to Africa as oppressed peoples fought to throw off colonial domination.

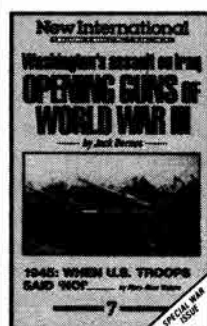
McNamara explains the Cuban revolution especially set off alarm bells in the new administration. He describes the de-

From  
Pathfinder

## Out Now!

A Participant's Account of  
the Movement in the United States Against the  
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By Fred Halstead

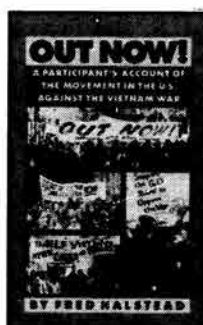
The story of the U.S. component of the international anti-Vietnam war movement; how it refuted Washington's rationales for the war and mobilized opposition to it; and how the antiwar movement, gaining momentum from the fight for Black civil rights, helped force the U.S. government to bring the troops home, thus spurring struggles for social justice and changing the political face of the United States. \$30.95



## New International No. 7

a magazine of Marxist politics and theory

- **Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq** by Jack Barnes
- **Communist Policy in Wartime as well as in Peacetime** by Mary-Alice Waters
- **Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War** by Samad Sharif \$12



Available from bookstores listed on page 12 or directly from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. If ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover postage and handling.



# Millions attracted to book fair in Tehran

BY MARCELLA FITZGERALD

TEHRAN, Iran — "This embargo is a cold war by America against Iran. America is trying to get more and more out of Iran, but the embargo will affect only the poor not the rich," said one young man from Unomieh at the recent Tehran International Book Fair. He is currently doing his military service in this city. This view reflected that of many people at the fair, which closed here May 26.

The 10-day-long event attracted close to 2 million people according to reports in the *Tehran Times* based on the sale of tickets. Buses came in from Tabriz, Hamadan, Kermanshah, Gilan, Zanjan, Yazd, Arak, Mashad, and many other areas.

The book fair coincided with the 13th anniversary of the liberation of the port city of Khorramshahr, a heroic victory in the war against Iraq. With the backing of Washington, Saddam Hussein invaded Iran in 1980, one year after the Iranian revolution. Flowers were scattered from the air over the book fair and the streets were decorated with banners to commemorate the battle at Khorramshahr.

Many people visiting the Pathfinder booth were interested in the broad range of revolutionary books on hand and identified themselves with the struggles of working people around the world. "Castro belongs to us, too," commented one man visiting the booth.

As the fair continued, more and more people came back to see the books at the Pathfinder table. One student who bought

Thomas Sankara's *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* on the first day of the fair came back on the last day with two of his friends. They plan to translate the pamphlet and give a class on it at school. When asked why this topic, he said, "There is no revolution without women being liberated."

Just before the book fair closed a young man hurriedly came to the booth. He brought back a copy of *Problems of Women's Liberation*, by Evelyn Reed, which he had bought as a present for his wife. She had already read many of the essays, which have been printed in different papers here. In exchange, he bought a copy of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels for her. Two young men who purchased the Farsi version of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara last year came back to visit the Pathfinder booth. They said that after reading the pamphlet they now realize that Cuba was different than the Soviet Union.

More than 60 copies of a Farsi translation of the *New International* article "Washington's Assault on Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III" were sold at the fair. Published on the eve of the fair, the article was well received. One of the volunteer translators of the book recounted the story of carrying some copies of the Farsi version to the fair. The taxi driver asked the volunteer for a copy rather than his fare. The cab fare was much higher than the cost of the book. One person who



Marcella FitzGerald

Pathfinder booth at 1994 Tehran book fair. Some 2 million attended this year's fair.

bought the book said someone saw it in his hands and asked to buy it from him.

"The fact that U.S. forces are still stationed in the Gulf and that the number of U.S. warships is currently being increased there makes this book very live and fresh," the translator said. "The U.S. embargo, which is seen as the political expansion of the military presence in the region, is adding weight to this and gives this timely book greater resonance."

There was lively interest in the Cuban stand at the fair also, although the books were for display only. Two soldiers came by looking for books on the Cuban armed forces saying they had immense respect for the Cubans and wanted information on how they organize defense of their revolution. The representative from the Cuban

embassy who staffed the stand said that it was important to be at the book fair and that they would want to bring more books next year because of the interest.

Foreign publishers selling technical books and text books sold out of many titles in the first three days, as people surged into the book fair to buy books at prices subsidized by the government. Some book buyers said they were not confident that the books would be available next year.

Discussion on the higher prices at this year's fair was constant. Inflation is a burning question in Iran — and has been exacerbated by the U.S. trade sanctions. Following the introduction of a fixed exchange rate last week of 3,000 rials to the dollar aimed at trying to stabilize the currency, those found trading at "free market" rates have been subject to arrest. The Majlis (Iranian parliament) debated a bill May 23 to introduce capital punishment for those found guilty of profiteering.

## March in Quebec demands social rights

BY ANNE-MARIE KENDERGIE

LANORAIE, Quebec — Singing and chanting their demand for "Bread and Roses," hundreds of women are marching across the province of Quebec to demand measures to fight the growing poverty facing women and working people today.

The ten-day march began Friday, May 26. In Montreal, hundreds of people joined the first leg of the procession through the city. Two other contingents left Longueuil, south of Montreal, and Rivière-du-Loup, east of Quebec City. Each contingent will cover distances of approximately 120 miles, converging on Quebec City June 4 for a rally and demonstration. Organizers are expecting up to 10,000 people for the final day.

The marchers are hospital, daycare, and other workers, community activists, students, unemployed, and others. There is a wide range of ages among them.

The march, initiated by the Quebec Women's Federation, is sponsored by more than 40 organizations, including

trade union women's committees, farm women's committees, and groups that work for immigrant rights, affirmative action, and rights for the unemployed.

The most talked-about of the nine demands of the march in the press is an increase in the minimum wage from Can\$6 to Can\$8.15 per hour [Can\$1 = US\$0.72]. Other demands include a program of social infrastructure with jobs for women, pay equity, access to decent-paying jobs and job-training programs for all those unemployed, the construction of 1,500 units of social housing a year, and measures for immigrant women and students.

The march has received increasing attention as a debate unfolds over government plans for cutbacks, especially the closing of nine hospitals in the Montreal region alone — a decision that has sparked a wave of almost daily protests, picket lines, petitioning, and other actions by hospital workers in the city.

As this article is being written, the women have been marching for four days

and have completed over 80 kilometers (some 50 miles). This reporter was able to join the action for two days, as the protesters proceeded along the north shore of the St. Lawrence river.

As the march enters each small community people line up to greet the demonstrators, singing and chanting their support. People come out of farmhouses to wave and cars going by toot their horns. Townspeople come join the march. As we entered one village, the woman beside me commented, "Even though at night I do feel my aches and pains as I try to sleep, during the day, because of this kind of support, I don't feel a thing."

"This project has totally inspired me," Denise Routhier told the press. "Poverty is changing the social fabric of Montreal... It can't go on this way. There are too many poor and the rich get richer."

In every town, community groups take responsibility for feeding and housing the marchers. Schools and community centers have opened their doors.

## Socialists assess shifts in AFL-CIO officialdom

Continued from Page 6

1-7 'Cuba Lives' Youth Festival and October 14 regional actions against U.S. policy toward Cuba as important activities that unionists should build both on and off the job.

Participants at the meeting noted that struggles taking place outside the workplace reinforce fights for better conditions on the job. Sheila Ostrow explained the response women had at her plant when they found out she was going to Washington, D.C., for the April 9 rally in defense of abortion rights and against violence against women. Many were disappointed that they hadn't learned about the demonstration sooner so that they could make arrangements to attend.

Part of the new developments in the labor movement will be a step-up in union organizing drives, which is reflected in the fact that the absolute number of union members has stabilized over the last two years. "We should also expect that part of this left turn among union officials will be a greater variety of conferences held with official blessing," said McCartan. "While they are reaching out to bring militant workers in behind them, we need to be going to these meetings and doing the same. We need to get to the picket lines where struggles are going on to discuss and de-

bate our views with workers who are looking to fight. We need to clearly pose a working class alternative to the class collaborationism of the union tops in both the work place and in the voting booth."

The socialist workers meeting in Toronto also discussed proposed changes in how local branches of the Socialist Workers Party organize their political work. These are aimed at strengthening the ability of all members to participate in social and political struggles, revitalize the party's work in the unions, and win young people to the communist movement.

The proposals include moving off second shift jobs to free up time to attend political meetings and activities in the evenings; maximizing the number of workplaces where two or more members of the party work together; and moving party branch meetings and public forums to weeknights to allow socialist workers time on the weekends to get involved in protest actions, organize informal discussions with youth and co-workers interested in socialism, and to get out in their regions to developments in the labor movement or other social protest activity.

"By doing this, we can better organize ourselves to carry out campaigns collectively, and we can be more effective," McCartan said. "And if we are right about

what underlies this turn at the top levels of the unions, and can make these shifts in how we organize ourselves, then the best way we can revitalize our work in the union movement is to go out as communist workers to participate in broader political activities such as events in defense of the socialist revolution in Cuba, the fight against war, racism, the death penalty and for women's rights and bring that experience back to our fellow unionists."

This has been the job of communist workers since the inception of the modern working-class movement, he said. Bringing politics into the working class and its mass organizations is an essential part of fighting to transform the unions into revolutionary instruments of struggle for the entire working class.

The day's discussions were wrapped up by attending a Militant Labor Forum on "Cuba and the Special Period — How Workers Use Their Socialist Revolution to Fight the Effects of the International Crisis of Capitalism," with a talk given by Mary-Alice Waters. Through this discussion socialists in the Steelworkers union and other activists in attendance were able to gain a sharper understanding of the position of the Cuban revolution in the world today and the increased openings to win young people and workers to its defense.

## — CALENDAR —

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**Stop the Attacks on Our Democratic Rights — Stop the Omnibus Counterterrorism Act.** Speakers: John Roberts, American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts; Susan Akram, Associate professor at Boston University School of Law; Naseer Aruri, professor of political science at University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, and member Palestine National Council; Osip Bukharin, Maine Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; Mario Davila, American Friends Service Committee, Campaign for Immigrant Rights, Racial and Social Justice; Geraldine Hines, National Conference of Black Lawyers. Thurs., June 8, 7:30 p.m. *Community Church, 565 Boylston St.* For more information (617) 524-1166 or (617) 825-8833. Various sponsors.

### BRITAIN

#### Manchester

**Containers for Cuba: End the Embargo, End Whitehall's Complicity.** Speakers: Wendy Knight and Jo O'Brien, recently returned from Cuba. Slide show. Thurs., June 8, 7:30 p.m. *Friends Meeting House, Mount St., near Albert Square.* For more information: (0161) 202-5790. Sponsor: *Cuba Solidarity Campaign.*

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Cuba Today.** Speaker: Alejandro Herrera Agate, member of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba touring New Zealand. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. at *Aotea Methodist Chapel, 370 Queen St.* Thurs., June 8, 1 p.m. at *Auckland University, Large Chemistry Lecture theatre.* For more information: (09) 524-4716.

### ILLINOIS

#### Decatur

**March and Rally in Support of Workers in Decatur.** Come show your solidarity with workers at A.E. Staley, Caterpillar, and Bridgestone/Firestone. Sun., June 25. March assembly 11 a.m., rally 1 p.m. **Labor Conference — Directions for the Labor Movement of Tomorrow.** Discussion of a labor party and democracy in our unions. Sat., June 24, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. *UPIU/AIW Hall, 2882 N. Dinneen.* For more information on the rally and the conference contact *Staley Workers Campaign for Justice, Tel: (217) 872-2205, or UAW Local 751, Tel: (217) 428-7706.*



The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation are welcome to attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

## CALIFORNIA

### San Francisco

**Art and Revolution Today: A Roundtable Discussion.** Speakers: Mike Amnasan, playwright, member Sheet Metal Workers' Union; Miyung Mi Kim, poet, professor of poetry at San Francisco State University; Kevin Magee, poet; Miguel Pendas, filmmaker. Fri., June 9, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission and 24th St. BART). Donation \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**The Struggle for Democracy and Social Justice in Haiti Today.** Speaker: Ernie Mailhot, just returned from *Militant* reporting trip to Haiti. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. (between NE 1st Ave. and NE 2nd Ave.). Donation: \$5. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**Clinton's 'Counterterrorism' Bill.** Speakers: Teresa Nelson, executive director American

Civil Liberties Union of Georgia; Nicole Colvin, Young Socialists; representative, American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Floyd Fowler, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 803 Peachtree St. (Midtown, at 5th St.). Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Should Working People Support a U.S. Troop Deployment in Bosnia?** Speaker: Mary Nell Bockman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 214-216 Ave. A (between 13th and 14th Sts.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 388-9346.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**Victory for Cuban Detainees!** Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

### Pittsburgh

**Trade War With Japan: What's at Stake for Working People?** Speaker: Cecelia Moriarity, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 1103 E Carson St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**AIDS: How to Confront Today's Crisis.**

Speakers: Paul Hornick, AIDS volunteer and recent participant in Pastors for Peace research trip to Cuba; Brian Herod, AIDS data research worker; Robbie Scherr, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers. Fri., June 16, 7:30 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway #250. Donation: \$4. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**The U.S.-Japan Trade Conflict: Should Working People Support Tariffs and Protectionism?** Speaker: Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

**No to U.S. and NATO Military Intervention in the Former Yugoslavia! Lessons from Lenin's Final Fight for Today's Fighters.** Speakers: Ma'mud Shirvani and Rebecca Gettleman, member of the Young Socialists and UTU Local 1730. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 5:30 p.m. King County Labor Temple, Room 8, 2800 First Ave. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Health Care is a Right!** Panel discussion. Fri.,

June 9, 7:30 p.m.

**The Struggle for Self-determination in Ireland.** Fri., June 16, 7:30 p.m.

**Stop FBI Harassment and Political Frame-ups.** Panel discussion. Fri., June 23, 7:30 p.m. Above events held at 1802 Belmont Rd. NW. All forums \$4 donation. Tel: (202) 387-2178.

## BRITAIN

### London

**Behind the War in Former Yugoslavia—The Case Against Intervention.** Speaker: Jonathan Silberman, co-author of *The Truth About Yugoslavia*. Fri., June 9, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-401-2409.

### Manchester

**Stop Police Frame-ups, Defend Democratic Rights.** Fri., June 9, 7 p.m. 60 Shudehill, first floor. Tel: 0161-839-1766.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Christchurch

**The Legacy of Malcolm X.** Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League. Fri., June 16, 7 p.m.

**Lenin's Final Fight.** Mike Peters, Communist League. Fri., June 23, 7 p.m.

Both events at 199 High St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

# U.S., NATO widen Bosnia war

Continued from front page

commander of the rightist military detachments in Bosnia, have repeatedly defied a February 1994 NATO directive that established a 12.5-mile weapon-free zone around Sarajevo. The exclusion zone has steadily eroded to the point where sniper fire and shelling of civilians have become common in Bosnia's capital.

Serb troops refused to return heavy weapons they reclaimed from UN forces. Mladic's troops killed at least 70 people in the central Bosnian town of Tuzla with rocket fire May 25. The attack on the designated "safe area" was the most lethal single shelling of the war.

Large-scale fighting spread into Croatia in early May shattering the "permanent cease-fire" reached in March 1994 between Croat and Serb forces.

"For Europeans, Bosnia is the quagmire that Vietnam was for the United States three decades ago," wrote Craig Whitney in the *New York Times*. Sizing up the possibility of a war engulfing the Balkans and spilling over into other parts of Europe, Paris, London, and Moscow had earlier warned they may pull out troops deployed in Bosnia under the UN flag. But the NATO "attack confirms that the United Nations, faced with the choice of taking a tougher stance or withdrawing, has opted for now for toughness," reported the *Times* May 26. The paper also pointed out that "the NATO raid...bore the hallmark of American planning."

Contact Group officials endorsed a plan to regroup the UN force May 30 and grant them the authority to engage in more aggressive actions. London announced it would deploy an additional 6,000 soldiers to the area. The French government sent the aircraft carrier *Foch* and helicopter gunships to join the more than 4,000 French troops stationed there.

Washington, which already deployed the aircraft carrier *Theodore Roosevelt* to the Adriatic Sea, is sending 2,000 marines trained in commando operations. U.S. defense secretary William Perry agreed to supply 25,000 soldiers to help with any troop withdrawals.

Despite the Contact Group's agreement to reinforce the military presence in Bosnia, the Balkan war has revealed the deep rifts among European and North American capitalists. As the war widens, the conflicting interests of the imperialist powers, and those of Moscow, sharpen. Each is maneuvering to gain economic, political, and strategic military advantages over one another in the Yugoslav war.

Russian president Boris Yeltsin, for example, offered May 26 to help resolve the Bosnia conflict if NATO promised to end air assaults. Yeltsin expressed anger that he was not consulted until after the crisis was exacerbated by the air strikes.

"For the past three years, there have been tortuous discussions about which international body—the United Nations, NATO or the Western European Union—was best suited to handle the Balkan

crisis," wrote Bruce Clark and Bernard Gray in the London *Financial Times*. The authors expressed dismay saying, "Each of the outside powers involved in the conflict thinks first about...its own interests."

Governments with large numbers of troops in Bosnia and Croatia are especially nervous about the reactions of working people at home to expansion of the war. They don't share Washington's enthusiasm for aerial bombardment.

Even after announcing stepped up troop deployment, London's foreign secretary Douglas Hurd said, "Withdrawal remains a possibility." The House of Commons and the House of Lords were reconvened to debate London's response in Bosnia. The Labour Party's Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown of the Liberal Democrats backed the deployment.

On the other hand former Conservative prime minister Edward Heath blamed Washington for the Balkan crisis. "We are facing a situation where we may be dragged into a major war and that is absolutely unjustifiable," he argued. "This is the outcome of the bombing. We have warned against bombing—the pressure has come from the United States."

French prime minister Alain Juppé distanced himself from the NATO air strikes. He described the bombings as poorly prepared operations that "exposed the peacekeepers to risks" and must never be repeated.

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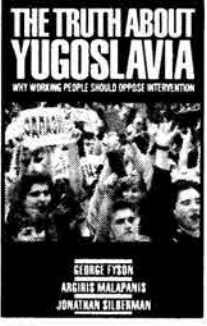
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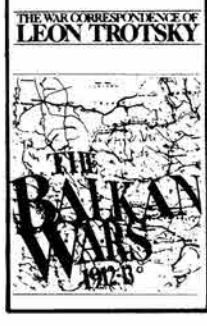
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peated. Close to 40 French soldiers have been killed in the fighting and 154 are being held by rightist Serbs. Paris, with the largest number of troops in Bosnia, is under increasing pressure as more troops die in the fighting. Two French soldiers were killed May 27 during a UN raid to recapture an observation post in central Sarajevo.

The *New York Times* editors called the NATO air strikes "a justified use of force

to safeguard the civilians of Sarajevo." They also called for additional troops to Bosnia, but not U.S. soldiers.

"We have not yet shown either the willingness or ability to carry out a concerted campaign of air strikes," complained Warren Zimmermann, the last U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia and an advocate of much greater use of U.S. military power there. "We are not prepared to take the risk of casualties."

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**Defrost** — Modifying a "cold war" regulation, the U.S. embassy in Moscow will now permit staffers to engage in "intimate or romantic relationships" with Russians. They must, however, report



Harry Ring

any such activity to embassy security. The new regulation does not apply to soldiers or spies.

**The 'color-blind' society** — The estimated number of white crack cocaine users is double that

of Black and Latino users. But since 1986, when Congress imposed stiff mandatory sentences for crack dealers, not a single white has been prosecuted in the federal court serving Los Angeles and six neighboring counties. Invariably, white dealers have been prosecuted in state courts where sentences are much lower. The pattern is pretty much true for other major U.S. cities.

**Harvard, here we come** — The Clinton administration approved Arizona's welfare "reform" law which, among other things, denies additional aid for children born to a family already on welfare. But it does include a very liberal clause which allows

employed welfare recipients to save some of their money for education and training.

**Simple Hollywood folks** — We're among the few moviegoers who didn't see "Forrest Gump," but we gather he saw some good in everyone. Winston Groom, author of the novel on which the film is based, may be reconsidering.

His contract with Paramount included 3 percent of the net profit. The film has grossed an awesome \$650 million so far. But, according to Paramount's way of counting, it has yet to make a dime. Groom is suing.

**It figures** — When U.S. troops

took over in Haiti, various governments pledged a total of \$1.6 billion to aid the impoverished country. So far, some \$200 million has arrived. Of this, \$52 million has been spent for food, health, etc. The remaining \$148 million? Payment on the national debt, plus payment for oil imports, government salaries, and costs of administering aid projects.

**Comedians** — A Baltimore prof has isolated an anti-corrosive element in tobacco which could inhibit rust in your car radiator or other metallic parts. He tried for research grants from the tobacco biggies but they told him, apparently with a straight face, that they're only interested in health-

related research.

**You'll do well to look out for them** — Visiting Miami, a Puerto Rico *Militant* supporter helped staff a Pathfinder campus table. Nearby, Citibank credit card applications were being passed out under a sign declaring: "No fees, no worries, we're looking out for you."

**Mum's the word** — Scotland Yard is mortified. After eight years, someone figured out that a civilian accountant was ripping them off. He had been put in unsupervised charge of an \$11.5 million undercover operations fund, and assertedly funneled \$8.5 million into his personal accounts.

## Toronto socialist seeks to advance workers' fight

BY AL CAPPE  
AND SUSIE BERMAN

"Working people and youth are looking for a way out of the deepening economic and social crisis," said John Steele at a recent meeting launching his campaign as the Communist League candidate for Ontario provincial parliament in the Fort York riding. "This is why fighters around the world are attracted to revolutionary Cuba as an example of how to fight against capitalism and organize a society based on human solidarity."

Steele, 51, is an assembly line worker at Ford Electronics. He and his supporters had just wrapped up a successful day of campaigning on street corners, at a meeting to organize against racist attacks on immigrants, and at a rally opposing violence against women.

The Progressive Conservative (Tories) and Liberal parties are the main contenders seeking to replace Ontario's New Democratic Party (NDP) government headed by Premier Bob Rae. Both parties blame the economic crisis on government spending and the deficit. All three try to convince working people to take responsibility for the government's budget problems and accept cuts in social programs.

The Tories propose implementing "workfare," forcing up to 400,000 people into government work projects in order to qualify for welfare benefits. Liberal leader Lyn Macleod and Tory Michael Harris both call for cutting welfare benefits.

Harris is also taking aim at affirmative action. Both parties say they will gut Law 40, known as the antiscab law, put into place under the Rae government. They also call for tax cuts.

### Discontent with NDP

There is widespread discontent among working people with the NDP. When elected in 1990, many workers expected it would defend working people. Instead it carried out deep cuts in social programs. Premier Rae implemented what he called the "Social Contract" under which public sector workers' contracts were torn up and their wages were cut; health care, education, and other services were reduced.

Workers' experiences with NDP governments over the last few years led to the lowest vote ever for the New Democrats in the last federal elections. Some opposed



Communist League candidate John Steele is running for parliament in Ontario

the NDP because of the cuts. Others saw no discernible difference between the NDP's proposals and the other major parties. A layer of workers voted for the right wing capitalist Reform party.

This has precipitated a big discussion within the leadership of the unions. Union officials at the Metro Toronto Labour Council were unable to come up with a common list of candidates to support. Officials of the United Steelworkers of America, the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union and others are urging support for the NDP. "As organizations who represent working people in Ontario," states a tabloid distributed in workplaces, "we unions don't really expect to be happy with everything the government does... Basically we want a government that is fair. We think we already have such a government." The tabloid points to Labor Law 40 as an example.

Public sector unions and leaders of the Canadian Auto Workers say they oppose a blanket vote for the NDP. They urge workers to only vote for candidates who opposed the "Social Contract" and are for a "strong public sector." As the elections near, however, they are increasingly campaigning against the Tories and Liberals. For instance, at the Ontario Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) con-

vention, a noon-time rally was organized to "protest Lyn Macleod's and Mike Harris' plans to gut Ontario's labour law."

"They (the union leadership) say don't vote Tories or Liberals. I'm not stupid. They want us to vote NDP. I think all the parties stink," one delegate at the CUPE convention told a *Militant* reporter. A young woman teaching assistant from York University explained, "I know the NDP hurt us. But I guess they're saying at least they'll defend Labor Law 40 and we need that. I think we should vote NDP."

"It's good that there's been some discussion in the trade unions on the experience with the NDP government," said John Steele. "But neither wing of the union officialdom presents a real alterna-

tive to the procapitalist perspective being put forward by all the parties, including the NDP."

In an interview on cable television, Steele remarked, "Every one of my opponents say the problem we face is the deficit. This is a lie. The deficit is their problem and we should take no responsibility whatsoever for it. Their campaign against the deficit is a scam to get us to agree to concessions — to give up basic rights like healthcare, unemployment insurance, and quality public education."

Steele rejects the scapegoating of welfare recipients. He calls for extending social security at union-scale wages to those unable to work.

Steele is campaigning to advance a struggle by the labor movement to shorten the workweek with no reduction in pay; defend affirmative action; and cancel the Third World debt. "Fighting around demands like these will help us overcome the divisions the employers use to get us competing with each other instead of defending ourselves as an international class," Steele explained.

On radio and television interviews, Steele encouraged others to join him at the upcoming Women's March against Poverty in Quebec. "Actions like this are important in advancing our struggles today and building a fighting labor movement," he explained.

He also is campaigning to build participation in the upcoming "Cuba Lives" festival taking place this August in Havana and other provinces in Cuba.

Al Cappe is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Susie Berman is a member of the Canadian Auto Workers union.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

**THE MILITANT**  
Published in the Interest of the Working People  
Price 10¢  
June 12, 1970

**SAN FRANCISCO, May 30** — The first Chicano Moratorium in Northern California was held here today. It was the largest demonstration of Chicanos and Latinos ever held in San Francisco. Starting in Garfield Park, about 1,500 marched to the Mission Dolores Park. The march visibly grew as it passed through the Chicano and Latino community in the San Francisco Mission District.

Banners from various organizations called for "Self-determination in Vietnam and at Home," "U.S. Fuera de Indochina," and "Bring the Carnales [Brothers] Home Now!"

The spirited and predominantly Chicano and Latino demonstrators repeatedly chanted "Raza Si! Guerra No!" They were received by the onlookers with interest and signs of solidarity. The call leaflet for the Chicano Moratorium stated that, "Over 8,000 brothers of La Raza have fallen in Indochina. *Ya Basta!* We must protest the squandering of our people's lives. Our struggle for equality and justice is at home."

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

### June 9, 1945

**PITTSBURGH, Pa., June 4** — William Patterson, 40-year old union coal digger from tiny company-owned Daisytown, 50 miles south of here, is the first American worker to be imprisoned under the infamous Smith-Connally anti-strike law.

Last Saturday this loyal union man, who has spent the past 17 years toiling down in the dark and deadly dangers of Vesta No. 4, world's largest soft coal mine owned by Jones and Laughlin Steel Corp., was thrust into the county prison at Uniontown, Pa. Snatched without warning from his wife and two children, he was condemned to six months behind bars.

Patterson was railroaded to prison last week on the technical charge of violating his probation, after the original conviction and suspended sentence imposed on him and 26 other union miners of this area in the August 1943 trial for alleged violation of the Smith-Connally Act.

They participated in the general mine strike that summer which was used as the pretext for pushing through the anti-strike law. On the advice of their legal counsel, they had been persuaded not to contest the charge. The government secured a conviction and, above all, a precedent.

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## No to expansion of Balkan war!

Over the past 15 months NATO forces, with U.S. jets doing most of the dirty work, have bombed Serbian targets in Bosnia eight times. While U.S. president Bill Clinton professes his desire to end the carnage in the former Yugoslavia, Washington is moving step by step to widen the war and make it more difficult for working people there to fight for a solution to the conflict.

Every move by the imperialist powers toward military intervention in the Balkans should be condemned by working-class fighters around the world. Whether the assaults are carried out under the NATO banner or United Nations flag, they place obstacles in the way of a resolution of the war.

Only the working class has the capacity and desire to end the slaughter and build a society that can travel the path to growth, economic development, and social justice. Workers and farmers throughout Yugoslavia, irrespective of nationality, united in the 1940s to make a revolution, defeat fascism, and topple capitalist and landlord rule. Today, they need the time and political space opened with the fall of the Stalinist machine to again fight their way into politics and find a working-class solution to the crisis. In defiance of the murderous attacks and chauvinist campaigns carried out by rightist forces over the past five years, millions of working people remain deeply hostile to the idea that they must no longer live with, work alongside, and marry people of different national origins, as they have done for decades. Imperialist intervention narrows the political space and makes it harder for workers to unite and overcome the challenges they face.

Contrary to its pretensions, Washington has no humanitarian concern for the victims of the fighting in the Balkans. In fact, since the armed conflict broke out, the rulers in the United States and most European countries have closed their borders to refugees fleeing the slaughter. The NATO bombings have resulted in greater loss

of life, yet the imperialist powers are determined to continue. The last U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia complains that "We have not yet shown either the willingness or ability to carry out a concerted campaign of air strikes."

The debates and decisions in parliaments and state houses, which are widely reflected in the media, on whether and when to intervene are based on the imperialists weighing how best to assert their own economic, political, and strategic military interests, not concern for the workers in or out of uniform.

The Contact Group's decision to widen the Balkan war has brought to the surface deep conflicts among imperialist powers in Europe and North America. The recent NATO bombings, like the air strikes last April, August, and November, were unilateral acts by the U.S. government after winning cover from some other NATO members. These actions expose the increasing contradictions in the so-called alliance. The air raids are aimed at expanding Uncle Sam's influence in the region. Paris and London are adding troops in the hopes of maintaining their stake.

The slaughter in the former Yugoslavia is not an ethnic battle. The forces fighting there are led by contending bureaucrats of the former privileged ruling caste who want to integrate the economies of the different republics into the sinking world capitalist system. They use the banner of nationalism to wage a ruthless gang war for control of land and resources.

Working people around the world have no interest in expansion of imperialist intervention in the Balkans. Despite their peacekeeping claims, the imperialists will only perpetuate the slaughter and oppression of the people of that region. Working people can best support our brothers and sisters in the former Yugoslavia by demanding: Stop the U.S. bombing! All UN troops and armaments out now!

## Solidarity with Brazil oil workers

"As long as solidarity continues, we will stay out against all odds until at least some of our basic demands are met," explained one oil worker occupying a refinery in Cubatão, Brazil. Working people around the world should take this to heart and give their full support to the unionists now entering their second month on strike.

The oil workers' struggle is the best answer to the rulers' austerity drive not only in Brazil but across Latin America. The strikers have declared they will not roll over and accept the trampling of their dignity and livelihoods.

Facing a mounting economic crisis, and under the gun of imperialist banks and investors in New York, London, and Tokyo, governments throughout the continent are trying to ram major concessions down the throats of working people through privatizations, layoffs, and speed up. Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso "is imposing the same policies as the governments in Argentina, Mexico, and Bolivia," one oil worker said. "They're turning over our national patrimony to multinationals for the price of bananas."

This strike is part of a broader resistance by workers and peasants in the region. The months before the oil workers walked out saw a strike by teachers and thousands of other workers in Bolivia, a series of strikes and uprisings in several provinces in Argentina, a May Day demonstration of 100,000 in Mexico City, continued resistance by peasants in southern Mexico, and numerous other struggles throughout Latin America.

The workers in Brazil are breaking the image the bosses and their lackeys in government throughout the capitalist world try to impose on working people — suffering victims who are incapable of standing up in solidarity as conscious, self-acting human beings. The massive industrial area where workers have occupied the refinery had been dubbed the "valley of death," because of pollution. Now it is earning the title "valley of struggle."

The struggles in Latin America, with the Brazilian oil

workers' strike at the center, also answer the arguments of politicians and union officials in the United States and other imperialist countries who try to convince workers that their counterparts in other countries are to blame for unemployment, falling wages, and cuts in social benefits. The strikes make it easier to understand that working people throughout the world face common problems and a common enemy — the world capitalist system — and are capable of fighting back and linking up in solidarity.

Not only do the strikers in Brazil connect their struggle to that of workers in other countries facing similar austerity measures, some are looking to the example of Cuba. Workers at a strike rally in Cubatão responded to a speech by a young Cuban communist with chants of "Brazil, Cuba, Central America; the working class is international."

By taking power out of the hands of the U.S. corporations and the national capitalist class through their socialist revolution, workers and farmers in Cuba became the first, and only, nation in Latin America to achieve real independence, dignity, and sovereignty. Today they are able to use that power to minimize the negative impact of the world economic crisis on workers' living standards and conditions.

The big-business press has been virtually silent on the class struggle unfolding in Brazil. They are scared of working people learning the truth about each others' fights, and thus breaking through the isolation they use to keep workers divided.

That's why the labor movement internationally has a responsibility to publicize the oil workers' strike. Working people in every country can help get out the facts about their fight; get messages of support from unions, student groups, and others; and build solidarity in every way possible. These strikers are in the vanguard of working-class struggle in the world today, and deserve international solidarity.

## U.S. gov't gains no allies in trade brawl with Tokyo

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Washington is finding itself increasingly isolated in its trade dispute with Tokyo. After announcing \$6 billion in punitive tariffs against 13 Japanese-made luxury cars, the Clinton administration was condemned by Asian and European governments. The administration also threatened to file a legal challenge to Tokyo's trading practices with the newly formed World Trade Organization (WTO).

At a May 29 meeting of the WTO's Council on Trade in Goods, trade officials told the *New York Times* that envoys from Australia, India, and Indonesia rebuked Washington's "unilateral actions."

"If they can bully the Japanese and still claim they are going through the WTO, how much easier will it be for them to lean on us," asked an Asian trade diplomat.

European officials issued a warning at a May 24 meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that they would sue Tokyo and Washington if the Japanese government agreed to demands for quotas on increased imports of U.S.-made cars. "We believe such numerically denominated imports amount to managed trade and would violate international trade rules," said Leon Brittan, the European Union's top trade official.

While Clinton administration officials asserted that they had gained support from OECD members, others at the meeting said no other government was willing to back sanctions against Tokyo.

Capitalists in Europe, for their part, are worried about being cut out of any deals that involve numerical targets for increased sales of U.S.-made autos and auto parts.

"The Europeans can scream like pigs stuck on a gate as far I'm concerned," U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor said.

### Union officialdom backs Clinton's trade war

Clinton received strong support for his aggressive stance from union officials. "Three cheers for the Clinton administration," beamed United Auto Workers head Owen Bieber. "The administration showed its willingness to stand up for the thousands of highly skilled and productive American workers who will benefit from ending Japanese discrimination against competitive American-made vehicles and auto parts."

William Bywater, president of the International Union of Electronic Workers, chimed in, "I support the president's proposed sanctions on Japanese luxury cars."

Clinton administration officials recently acknowledged the cold shoulder Washington is receiving from the 124 members of the WTO. "I think there is a clear apprehension that we are going to court with a losing case," said a senior White House official.

### Tokyo showing no sign of buckling

Tokyo has given no sign of buckling to Washington's high pressure tactics. In fact the Japanese government has appeared to strengthen its resolve against its chief imperialist rival.

"In the past Japan has always bent down and yielded at the last moment," said Yoshikazu Kawana, the executive vice president of Nissan Motor Corp. and trade committee chairman of the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association. "Not this time," he added.

Toyota officials announced May 23 they are considering filing suit against the U.S. government in an effort to eliminate or reduce the impending sanctions on luxury vehicles.

Japan's minister of international trade and industry asserted that Tokyo is prepared to take retaliatory measures against U.S.-made products such as trucks and semiconductors.

The trade dispute highlights the escalating tensions between Washington and its imperialist rivals. The U.S. trade deficit with Japan rose 30 percent, to \$6.14 billion in March. Auto trade accounts for about two-thirds of the total deficit with Tokyo.

Nissan and Mazda, two of Japan's leading auto manufacturers, reported May 26 huge losses for their last fiscal years. The Mazda Motor Corp. reported a net loss of more than \$400 million when its fiscal year ended March 31. Nissan reported a net loss of \$1.86 billion — almost double the loss recorded the previous year. Toyota projected a substantial drop in earnings for the current year.

Honda and Mazda said May 23 they were temporarily suspending exports of their luxury cars to the U.S. in order to avoid the impact of the 100 percent tariffs.

Tokyo's hardened posturing toward the U.S. government also reflects the deepening economic crisis developing inside Japan. Japan's jobless rate rose to its highest level ever in April, a warning sign that the economy may be sliding back into a recession. Among graduating students entering the workforce in April, some 160,000 could not find jobs. According to Japan's Management and Coordination Agency, the number of jobless people in April totaled 2.14 million — up more than 10 percent from a year earlier.



# British Rail workers take job action on cutbacks

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or

saw all the men sitting there," said one of the workers who was glad to see that the workers had stuck together. "It was good to see the new starters there. I was very impressed by them."

The action followed an April 26 protest, when workers took their meal break between the fourth and fifth hours of the shift instead of after the shift as usual. Workers talked throughout the day about what kind of action to take against



800 construction workers rally in front of government offices in Panama City. They joined thousands of workers in a one-day strike May 23, protesting proposed Labor Code 'reforms' in Panama.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Some 25 track maintenance workers, members of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers (RMT) protested May 1 against British Rail's decision to cut meal allowances and eliminate cabins where workers clean up, eat, and use the restroom. The Permanent Way workers at Clapham Junction, London, showed up to work seven and a half hours late. "No matter how small the issue is, you have to fight. If you don't, they will walk all over you," one maintenance worker explained.

The job action forced management to meet with workers that same day about their grievances. Workers demanded the meal allowance, overtime pay for Good Friday and the day after Easter, return of the accommodations at Vauxhall, and full pay for the day of the late-show job action. Workers won all their demands except the \$32-a-week meal allowance. "I did not know what to expect when I walked into the cabin and

company harassment. When workers returned to the main cabin the discussions turned into a meeting where they decided on the May 1 protest.

### Long Island railworkers protest for a new contract

Members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) employed by the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) flexed their muscles with a widespread sick-out Friday, May 26. The action forced the LIRR to cancel all but 20 of the 144 regularly scheduled trains that day. More than 250,000 commuters ride the LIRR daily.

The BLE has been without a contract since Dec. 31, 1991, and without a pay raise for five years. Under the Federal Railway Labor Act, rail unions are not allowed to strike until completing an extended series of negotiations, mediation, and cooling-off periods. The contract dispute is currently before the National Mediation Board.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the LIRR's parent company, has refused to grant the

union's demands for pay increases and no take-backs on health and pension benefits. Following a two-day strike by the United Transportation Union (UTU) in June 1994, primarily over work-rule changes, the UTU and eight other unions won a three-year retroactive contract gaining an 8.7 percent raise over 3 years.

The engineers are fighting for improved pay rates based on the extensive training and certification that is now required by the Federal Railway Administration of operating locomotive engineers.

In addition to trying to hold off bigger pay hikes, the company is demanding that the BLE relinquish its union-administered benefits and pension plan for less coverage.

A *Militant* sales team visiting Penn Station in New York City to talk with rail workers found widespread solidarity with the job

action. "It is unfair for any workers to go without a contract. There is no justification for four years without a wage increase," said Bill Hotchkiss, an Amtrak engineer. "Any rider would be upset if they knew the facts. Management is clearly dragging their feet."

"The action was justified," Eric Marshall, a LIRR trainman, said. "It brought attention to the unique issues the engineers are bargaining for. The company can't operate without them." Another trainman agreed, "It had to be done. Now it will force the company to the bargaining table."

While the media quoted commuters expressing anger at the engineers, at least some of the hostility was directed at the LIRR for not informing riders that the walk-out was about to happen. "I blame management on this one," said Lou Body, a stock broker trying to get home. "A bright management could have seen this could happen and prepared for it."

### Unionists stage one-day walkout in Panama

Tens of thousands of workers from some 39 unions staged a 24-hour strike May 23 to oppose the Panamanian government's alterations of the country's Labor Code. Protests paralyzed Panama City. More than 800 members of the United National Union of Construction and Related Workers rallied in front of the offices of the labor ministry. Some 20,000 banana workers refused to work. Student groups also joined the action.

Government, business, and union officials met the day before to try to make a deal to prevent the walkouts. They failed to reach agreement on the Labor Code, vacations, temporary contracts, and other issues.

Contributing to this column were Jim Spaul, member of the RMT in London, and Ruth Robinette, member of the UTU in New York.

## LETTERS

### Curtis film at 'Dr.Video'

Several weeks ago, I rented the film "A Thin Blue Line" from "Dr. Video," the video store near where I work. When I returned the video, I brought along a copy of Nick Castle's "The Frameup of Mark Curtis" to lend to the store's proprietor so that he could view it with an eye towards adding it to his selection of documentary films. He stopped by my job yesterday to say that he liked the video very much. He asked for more information and an update on the Curtis case. As for my suggestion that he add the video to the documentary shelf in his store, he heartily agreed and said that he would distribute it as a "free rental."

Toba Singer  
San Francisco, California

### Random drug testing

The *Militant* is the only publication in the country willing to give railroad workers any in-depth coverage, and your May 22 article dealing with the difficulties faced by people in this dangerous industry was much appreciated. Overlooked in the article however, was the fact that 'rails' were stripped of their Constitutional rights in the 1980's.

Massive random drug testing came about as a result of a tragedy that occurred in 1987 when an engineer named Ricky Gates caused the deaths of several passengers on an Amtrak train. There is no doubt that drug use played a role in the disaster though the fatigue factor was lost in the ensuing hoopla.

What is in doubt is the motives of the bureaucrats, media moguls, televangelists and industrialists who used this terrible incident to



their own ends. There was a Congressional investigation, television specials, Elmer Gantry sermonizing and gleeful promises of even more widespread drug testing in the wake of this incident.

In the end it was decided that random drug testing was to be the wave of the future, even though this program seemed a clear violation of the Constitutional Amendments regarding: A) unreasonable search and seizure B) self-incrimination, and C) unwarranted government intrusion—as well as a violation of the concepts of "reasonable suspicion" and presumed innocence.

The case went to the Supreme Court where it was ruled that "the public's right to safety overrides any claim to individual rights." If the High Court purports to "protect the rights of even the least of us" then workers in drug tested industries are therefore the "less than the least." This ruling harkens back to similar decisions in favor of slavery, the Japanese internments, etc., and is not a

good reflection on our current judiciary.

Jeff Grab  
Lakeland, Minnesota

### New Zealand protests

On May 3, up to 3,000 students and young people staged a protest rally at the University of Otago's Student Union. University and polytechnic students nationally owe the government NZ\$900 million and this is expected to rise to \$1 billion this year.

Surprising police and university officials, students successfully occupied the university registry instead of marching into the city center as planned. Once inside the building students presented the vice-chancellor with a list of demands opposing "user pays education" and made plans to occupy the building over the next few days. Sixty to 100 students took part in the occupation which lasted three days.

Meanwhile in Auckland, 2,000 students protesting against their

fees joined protesters demonstrating against the Asian Development Bank Conference and its support of countries with poor human rights records. Fourteen people were arrested at the demonstration amid allegations of police harassment.

Protest actions were also held in Hamilton, Palmerston North and Wellington.

Education Minister Lockwood Smith, who previously pledged "to abolish fees or resign," stated that "the fees issue was a dead issue" and was unavailable to talk to student leaders.

Kyle Webster  
Dunedin, New Zealand

### Palestinian struggle

On May 20, Hanan Ashrawi, a spokesperson for the Palestine Liberation Organization during the 1992 peace negotiations, addressed over 200 people at the Ford Hall Forum in Boston. Currently, she directs the Independent Commission for Citizens Rights, which monitors human rights abuses.

"Palestinians were never accepted on an equal footing and continue to be denied sovereignty," she said. This was clearly demonstrated in the recent move by the Israeli government to confiscate 130 acres of Arab-owned land in East Jerusalem.

"There is no way to reconcile the peace process with the settlement process," she stated. The U.S., which supplied itself as a mediator during the negotiations, has not played this role and in fact "has been a party to the conflict."

She pointed to the U.S. casting its first veto in the UN Security Council in five years on May 17, blocking a resolution that declared

the land grab invalid. It is significant to note that the last U.S. veto of a UN resolution in 1990 blocked a resolution calling for a fact-finding mission to report on alleged abuses of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

During the discussion period Ashrawi was asked what brought the Israelis to the negotiating table. She explained that it was an accumulation of events including the end of the cold war, the isolation of Israel coming out of the Gulf war and the *intifada*. The *intifada* was the resistance movement of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories against subjugation and repression. She credited the *intifada* with "convincing many Israelis, not just in the government," that the occupation could not be sustained.

Ashrawi throughout the meeting called for an expansion of democratic forms of functioning in Palestine. For example Hamas, a group opposed to the peace accords, "are part of Palestinian public life" and that there needed to be space for open discussion and debate. The presentation ended with a "statement of hope. The worst thing would be to adopt the conclusion that there is no alternative to what is unfolding. And to have confidence in the will of the people."

Nancy Boyasko  
John Harris  
Boston, Massachusetts

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## 'Help us tell the truth about Cuba'

### Cuban youth leader talks with students, workers on first stops in Australia

BY MARNIE KENNEDY

SYDNEY, Australia — "The only question that would offend me is the question that isn't asked," Alejandro Herrera Agete told 45 students at Macquarie University here May 29.

Herrera, 27, is a leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba and a member of the organization's Provincial Bureau in Havana. He is on tour to tell the truth about Cuba's socialist revolution and win people to the idea of seeing it for themselves during the August 1-7 "Cuba Lives" International Youth Festival. The tour is sponsored by the Cuban Youth Tour committee, which includes student associations, academics, and supporters of Cuba.

The Macquarie meeting for Herrera, one of two held at the university that day, was organized by the International Solidarity Collective of the Students Association. It was the first campus event as part of Herrera's tour in the Pacific. Following a week-long visit to Australia, Herrera will be traveling to New Zealand; he has also been invited to speak in the Philippines.

In response to a question concerning the potential for widespread social unrest in the face of profound economic problems, Herrera noted, "The only serious outbreak that happened in Cuba happened more than 35 years ago, and that was the Cuban revolution."

One questioner asked, "Are there people who want complete political change?"

"There are people who want Cuba to be a capitalist country," Herrera answered. Some want "to go back to a market economy, to go back to private property, prostitution and racism, class differences where some people die from overeating while others die of hunger. The people made the revolution in order to eliminate such injustices."

Herrera responded to a question about support for the revolution around the world. "Most important is solidarity with the ideas," he said. Supporters of the Cuban revolution "should help us tell the



Young people join August 1994 rally of 500,000 in Havana protesting murder of a policeman during a boat hijacking. Most youth in Cuba defend the revolution, Herrera said.

truth about Cuba. Everyone here who has come to listen is making a valuable contribution. Your presence enables us to tell the truth — it is the greatest thing that can be done today for the Cuban revolution."

The second talk at Macquarie, which followed a reception attended by 20 people, was held at the Law School. The di-

rector of the school, Gill Boehringer, attended the reception. Boehringer participated in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the United States 35 years ago.

One participant asked if the World Bank was involved in Cuba now. "The World Bank has a very clear involvement in Cuba," said Herrera, "influencing other

countries not to invest in Cuba. Their conditions are unacceptable for the revolution. We'll never be in the World Bank's good books."

All points of view were welcomed at the meetings. Questions included: What happened with the collapse of the Soviet Union beginning in 1989? Where is the revolution going and what keeps it going? Is there room for spirituality in Cuba? How free are people to express different views? Are there restrictions on leaving Cuba imposed on Cuban citizens? Isn't promoting tourism a dangerous step to take? Are Cuba's criminal laws too harsh? At day's end 15 people had signed up for more information on the Cuba Lives festival.

Herrera also visited with a dozen Maritime Union of Australia members in the lunch room at Australian National Line's Port Botany container facility May 27. The same day he met three workers outside the Hoover plant here on their lunch hour to exchange views and experiences. One young worker asked if youth in Cuba are communists because they want to be or because they have to be. Herrera answered, "In Cuba not everyone is a communist. You don't have to be a communist to support the revolution. The Communist Party and the UJC select their membership from the most disciplined and most hardworking."

## Supporters of Cuba in Pacific set plans

BY JANET ROTH

SYDNEY, Australia — "The last 10 years have seen very dramatic events in the world. But we see that the friends of Cuba haven't changed because Cuba hasn't changed. We are loyal to the principles of freedom, human dignity, and socialism, and we're not planning to change that. What is most important is that we deeply believe in what we're doing."

These were the opening words of Basilio Gutierrez to the national meeting

of the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society held here May 19-21.

Gutierrez, an official of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), was a special guest at the meeting, along with ICAP vice-president Eva Seoane and the Cuban Consul-General to Australia, Marcelino Fajardo.

Some 50 other participants represented nearly every friendship society in Australia and from New Zealand.

Gutierrez outlined the economic crisis

that the Cuban people face, precipitated by the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union, and the dramatic impact this has had. "The United States thought it was their historic opportunity to destroy not just the Cuban system but the example of Cuba," he explained. "But the Cuban people have not lost their spirit, which is the fundamental question in being able to face the future."

"We have not overcome the crisis but our efforts are in the right direction, Gutierrez said. "The Cuban economy has the capacity to overcome the critical period, slowly but firmly."

Participants at the meeting discussed forthcoming tours of Australia by Cuban representatives. They greeted with enthusiasm the news that Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina would be visiting in June and be available to speak at a public meeting in Sydney on June 24, and resolved to build this as broadly as possible.

More immediately, the activists discussed the details of the May-June tour of Australia, New Zealand, and possibly the Philippines by Alejandro Herrera, a representative of the Union of Young Communists (UJC).

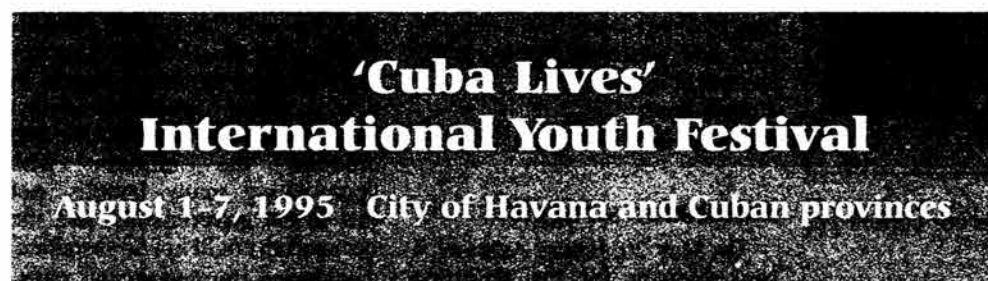
Throughout his tour, Herrera will be building participation in the "Cuba Lives" International Youth Festival that will take place in Cuba in August. Gutierrez urged the friendship societies to publicize this festival widely.

Melba Hernandez, a veteran leader of the Cuban revolution, is also scheduled to visit Australia, to coincide with the celebration of Cuba's national holiday July 26.

The conference also discussed an aid campaign to provide milk for Cuban children, an environmental project in Cuba, and building the brigade that visits Cuba every January from Australia and New Zealand. The meeting coincided with the centenary of the death of José Martí, a leader of Cuba's independence struggle last century. A special celebration was held, attracting some 150 people, to commemorate Martí's life.

Janet Roth is a member of the United Food, Beverage & General Workers Union in Auckland, New Zealand.

Cuban youth and students invite the youth of the world to



#### YOUTH OF THE WORLD:

We, Cuban youth and students, sharing with our people an infinite joy and a profound commitment to our history, our conquests and our dreams; Conscious of the immense human and political courage represented by the international solidarity with our country and the declaration of the blockade; Wishing to exchange views on current topics of interest to youth around the world, and to share with them the speakers podium, work, dancing, music, and a sincere smile;

Call on youth and student organizations, friendship associations, regional and international organizations, those who while being a little more than youth continue to feel close to the youth of Cuba, those who regardless of ideology or creed are opposed to the blockade against Cuba and cherish the right of peoples to self-determination, sovereignty and independence, to participate in the 'Cuba Lives' International Youth Festival, to be held August 1-7, 1995 in the city of Havana and other Cuban provinces. This call issued by:

UNION OF YOUNG COMMUNISTS OF CUBA  
FEDERATION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS  
JOSÉ MARTÍ ORGANIZATION OF PIONEERS

Topics to be discussed in the provinces:

**Employment** — Pinar del Rio • **Cultural and National Identity** — Havana City • **Education and Childhood** — Havana Province • **Environment and Development** — Matanzas • **Democracy and Participation** — Villa Clara • **Health Care** — Cienfuegos • **Women's Issues** — Isle of Youth

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